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The New Statesman and Nation, September 17, 1932.

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Mr. Gandhi's Last Challenge

THE NEW
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AND NATION

Incorporating *The Athenæum*

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* * *

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* * *

The revolutionary government of Spain has done better that its most ardent supporters could have hoped.

The Catalan problem—one of the most obstinate and ancient regional problems in Europe—has, we hope, been happily settled by the Statute which constitutes Catalonia an autonomous State. Colonel Macia, who seemed at one time irreconcilable, still expresses doubts about certain "unfortunate" compromises in the Statute, but he apparently fairly represents Catalonian opinion in regarding the settlement as generally satisfactory. Catalonia will have her own Parliament and law courts and will run her social services as she wishes out of her own taxes. A second great problem confronts the Spanish Premier. If his proposal to expropriate the great landlords and give the land to the peasants—possibly as tenants from the communities holding it from the State—also succeeds, the Spanish Republic will be firmly and happily established. Spain is one of the few places in the world to which one may look hopefully for a real renaissance of national life.

* * *

The winning of the State of Maine by the Democrats in the elections coming two months before the November polling is a smashing blow for Mr. Hoover, and it is not surprising that the managers of his Party should be filled with panic in every quarter of the United States. If the Republicans cannot hold Maine it is obvious that they cannot feel secure anywhere outside the few States in which a Democrat is as rare as a Sinn Feiner in Ulster. Hitherto it has been assumed that, while Mr. Hoover on the available evidence had something less than an even chance of re-election, his prospects would almost certainly improve during the interval. The activity of the Stock Exchange must be reflected in better business, and the belief that America had touched bottom would reinforce the sentiment in favour of a Republican Administration during the first stage of national recovery. The Maine results have made an end of all this. They compel the Hoover forces to realise, first, that national Prohibition can no longer be defended, since the parent Dry State has gone Wet, and secondly, that the public resentment created by the President's attitude towards the depression has demoralised the Republican vote. It is freely said that Governor Roosevelt is probably almost as certain of winning the Presidency now as Woodrow Wilson was in 1912. Nevertheless the issue must still be in doubt. Mr. Hoover has not much to hope for in economic recovery, since there cannot be any sure sign of that before November. But a presidential election is a gamble to the end.

* * *

South America continues to justify its designation as "the home of revolutions." In Brazil the insurgents of the south have consolidated their position, while the Government in the north shovels surplus coffee into the sea in the hope of raising coffee prices. In Chile Señor Davila is back again as President *pro tem.* for the third time in a hundred days, but the entire Chilean air force, upon which opposition had centred, has "dispersed" under adverse leadership. In Venezuela, Ecuador, and Peru there have been governmental changes *vi et armis*, and the future looks anything but settled. In the Gran Chaco, that long-disputed territory between Paraguay and Bolivia, a thorough guerilla war is being waged, with both sides celebrating one and the same action as a victory in their respective capitals. The root evils are economic, consequent upon that calamitous fall in the prices of primary products which heralded the slump in Australia and South America. There seems more hope for South America, politically and economically, in the results of the World Economic Conference than in either the mild temporisations of the League or the "dollar-diplomacy" of Pan-America.

* * *

So much insincere and prejudiced nonsense is published about Russia that it is now difficult for the newspaper reader to know what to believe and what to reject. If he is wise he will take no notice of the rumours of a plot to assassinate Stalin, and of the approaching collapse of the Soviet Government. But the serious nature of the food situation is no secret and no invention. The Russian papers themselves are frank enough about it. The rulers of Russia have concentrated too much on heavy industry and have found themselves obliged to export food which should have been consumed at home. The fall in the world prices of grain, timber and oil has hit them hard. But the principal trouble is on the land itself. They were right in regarding the kulaks as the chief enemies of Socialism and right in setting to work to substitute large-scale co-operative agriculture for the wasteful and absurd system of tradition. But by attempting to carry out in a couple of years a great revolution which should have taken a couple of decades, they have forcibly rid themselves of any chance of winning the co-operation of the most experienced farmers. Collectivisation for the moment has produced in many districts not efficiency but chaos. Above all, by taking away too large a proportion of grain from the peasants they have created a suspicion and hostility which shows itself in less sowing, less weeding, and less reaping. As a result the Russian Government is now passing Draconian legislation directed against sabotage on the co-operative farms and at the same time making individualist concessions to encourage peasants to produce as much as possible. All this means that Russia has a very hard year in front of her; but Russia is used to hardship and there is at present no threat either to the Socialist basis of Russian economy or to the stability of the Russian Government.

* * *

Mr. Ramsay Muir's sweeping condemnation of the Ottawa agreements (in his monthly "Westminster News Letter") has been given considerable prominence, and it is probable that what he has said this week will be endorsed next Tuesday by the National Liberal Federation. If so, Sir Herbert Samuel, who has, we understand, been thinking about his position ever since last December, will have to think a little harder and a little faster. Liberals are still divided in opinion as to whether their Ministers should resign. A majority of the party, undoubtedly, would like them to do so; not only because of the Government's protectionist policy but because of its failure to deal constructively with the problems of industry and employment. Ranged against them are those who regard Liberal support as essential to Mr. MacDonald's continuance in office, and Mr. MacDonald's continuance in office as a phenomenon having positive value; and a handful of so-called Liberal M.P.s who hold their seats by the grace of Tory votes. Some of these gentlemen, when the split comes, will perhaps join the Simonite Tories. In these circumstances the "agreement to differ" must surely be hard to maintain. It amounted to a statement by the free-trade Ministers that they would eat dirt provided that they might be allowed to explain in public that it was dirt they were eating. But to approve the Ottawa Conference may seem to the Liberal Ministers to involve swallowing rather more than the proverbial peck of dirt which a man may safely eat.

* * *

The Trade Union Congress has shown itself much less certain about Ottawa than Mr. Ramsay Muir, and we hope that the Labour Party will go one better than the General Council's evasive report on tariffs. For the reception of the Ottawa proposals on the Continent leaves no doubt that European statesmen are prepared to regard their acceptance as involving a definite withdrawal of Great Britain from the movement for European economic co-operation, and are likely to make their own arrangements on lines which will seriously prejudice the position of British exporters in the European market. It seems certain that the Government will endeavour to use its huge majority to push through the Ottawa agreements with the minimum of free discussion. But the parties which have not gone over to whole-hogging protectionism can at any rate make plain their refusal to be bound by any such measures as are now in contemplation, and so do something to counteract the prevailing impression abroad that Great Britain is shutting herself up definitely and irrevocably behind a wall of Imperial tariff preferences and quotas, and resigning once and for all her attempt to guide the world back towards economic sanity based on international co-operation.

* * *

The appeal of the Trade Union Congress for a fund to aid the strikers in the cotton industry is meeting with a very generous response, in view of the depleted condition of the war chests of most of the Trade Unions. As we write, negotiations are being taken up again with the participation of the Ministry of Labour, but there is no sign that either side has modified its attitude, and the question of reinstatement still stands in the way of a compromise on the wage issue. In the spinning section of the industry, however, the chances of a settlement without a stoppage have improved, now that the employers have agreed to postpone their notices, and the Unions to meet them afresh in conference. The action of the employers is generally understood as indicating their readiness to modify their original claims. The dispute in the cotton trade is being anxiously watched by both employers and operatives in other industries, since it is felt that if wages come down in Lancashire there will probably be a round of demands for similar reductions elsewhere during the next few months. That partly explains the eagerness with which other Trade Unions have rallied to the cotton operatives' support. Once again the attempt is being made to meet the depression by the deflation of working-class incomes. Lancashire is likely to be a test case.

The Durham Public Assistance Committee has refused to obey the orders of the Minister of Health, and is threatened with supersession by the bureaucratic administrators whom he has the power to appoint. In view of the strength of feeling over the "means test," the only thing which has held back other Public Assistance Committees from following the same course is the conviction that administration by officials sent down by the Government will be likely to create worse local hardships than obedience to the Ministry's orders. A Public Assistance Committee which remains at its post can at all events do some things that the Minister dislikes, and prevent him from intervening until after the event. No doubt this is usually the wisest course for a Committee to adopt. But there comes now and then a breaking point, and we shall not be surprised if during the coming winter quite a number of other Committees follow Durham's example. There is no doubt at all about the furious indignation which the administration of the "means test" is provoking throughout many industrial areas. The plain fact is that the "means test" is of a sort which a self-respecting body of councillors can scarcely administer with a good conscience, and the point may easily come before long at which the right policy will be for the local Committees to throw in their hands, and cast the responsibility for what is being done where it belongs—upon the National Government.

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Now that Paul Gorguloff has been publicly executed perhaps the efforts to prove that he was inspired by Moscow or (as *L'Humanité* would have it) by some white Russian organisation, will cease. Paul Gorguloff was not sane—and everyone knows that he was not sane. We do not suggest that he was better in the world than out of it, but we do join in protesting against an execution which was manifestly prompted by political motives. At the trial the doctors who came to give evidence that he was not responsible for his actions were scarcely given a hearing and the decision to execute Gorguloff was clearly made before the trial began. There is, of course, something to be said for putting dangerous lunatics to death, but the French legal code contains no provision for substituting the guillotine for the asylum.

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The "flying [Hutchinson] family," including two little girls aged eight and six, came down in their seaplane on the coast of Greenland at the beginning of the week. They were rescued, after two days' alarums and excursions, by an Aberdeen trawler. Their story was as manna in the wilderness to the evening papers. Some papers have seen in their foolhardy experiment the romance of high adventure; others have condemned it as a pointless publicity stunt and have (justly, we think) reprehended a gamble with two children's lives. At their age they get all the discomfort of the trip without any particular thrill. But what strikes us most forcibly is the inordinate selfishness of the whole affair. The plight of the flyers, involving as it did complicated and hazardous rescue operations, disorganised useful activities over a wide area, and imperilled many lives as well. The Hutchinsons can hardly be proud of the trouble they have caused.

MR. GANDHI'S LAST CHALLENGE

BY Mr. Gandhi's threat of self-immolation the slow, impersonal misery of the Indian struggle has been lifted to the level of imminent tragedy. The one member of the human race who is to-day regarded by millions of people as a saint has declared that he will sacrifice his life as a protest against one of the British Government's decisions. It needs but a slight exercise of the imagination to foresee the fevered days of passion through which India will pass if and when Mr. Gandhi's fast begins. Many thousands of men will cease work, and await, day after day, the crisis of the sacrifice, knit together by a single apprehension, a unanimous resentment. They will be moved partly by the usual human feelings which would stir us in such a case, but also by a mystical sense that a cosmic drama is being enacted before their eyes, a struggle between spirit and matter incarnated in this frail saint and his adversary, the Empire. Imagine a believing, mediaeval world on its knees round Calvary, and a crucifixion lengthening into days or weeks, and one may form some idea of the experience through which this intensely emotional people will pass. If it ends in death will not the last chance of reconciliation with Pilate be gone? Will not "the martyr" always stand between us and them? No one will remember the nicely balanced pros and cons of this dispute over the untouchables. On the merits of the decision Mr. Gandhi may not to-day represent the majority of Indian opinion. But India will remember only the broad fact that her saint performed the final rite of *satyagraha*, that he gave his life in passive protest against the Empire.

With this official correspondence before us, we may easily make the mistake of considering this affair too narrowly. It is the culmination of a long campaign in which Mr. Gandhi conceived himself to be pitting spiritual power against brute force. Sacrifice was his tactic, and it rose by a gradual crescendo. First his followers courted prison by making contraband salt: next they faced the lathis of the police: then they risked their lands by withholding taxes: now at last their leader offers life itself. It is his last throw. If it fails then India will take to violence. This method, it may be, is no more rational than violence. It is an attempt by will-power to coerce others to act against their better judgment. It is formidable only because nearly all Hindus, many Moslems and a great part of the civilised world outside our island venerate this man as few other human beings have ever been venerated. No argument, however trim, over the constitutional merits of the dispute that is the occasion of this sacrifice will help us when we face the Indian people. Memory simplifies.

We are not disposed to argue at length upon the merits of this dispute. An institution so abominable as this system of untouchability, which condemns forty millions of Indians to lifelong hereditary degradation, admits of no good solution when one tries to adjust it to a more or less democratic constitution. For our own part we would prefer the expedient of reserved seats. If the untouchables are segregated in a special communal electorate, then their isolation is legalised and made permanent. If, on the other hand, they are swamped in the general Hindu electorate, they must depend on the goodwill of the superior castes in general, and of Congress in particular, for any representation at all. They are a numerous but scattered minority, illiterate, in most places unorganisable, and so abysmally poor that relatively few of them will qualify by any test of property. Mr. MacDonald's ingenious compromise does both these things, and cannot therefore altogether avoid the objections to which each course is open. It doubtless is in Mr. Gandhi's mind that Congress, if these outcasts remain wholly within the Hindu electorate, will shepherd them, and place a number of their candidates on its lists. But in Mr. MacDonald's separated electorate the militant movement led by Dr. Ambedkar will have its chance, and may create a furious anti-Hindu party, which will combine, with the Moslems and the smaller minorities, to break the nationalist movement and support the Imperial Power. Mr. Gandhi presumably realises that the British Government cannot withdraw its settlement at his demand. He may hope that Indians may now themselves make it superfluous by coming together to comprise an agreed settlement while he fasts. That, given the pressure of Indian public opinion, is not an impossible miracle. No Indian minority will wish to share the guilt of the national hero's death. The Indian Government, if it can in any way promote such a settlement, ought for its own sake to smooth the way.

Failing this precarious chance, the responsibility of averting this tragedy must largely rest with Mr. MacDonald. It is not enough that he devised a solution which doubtless seemed to him good. Form of Mr. Gandhi what conception you please: condemn his act by any cold scientific word that comes handy: the fact remains that it will have its historical consequences. The least of them will be to wreck whatever chance there was that India will ever consent to work Sir Samuel Hoare's constitution. It has been, in our view, wasted labour ever since he interned Mr. Gandhi, set out to crush Congress and drove even the Liberals into opposition. If India's resistance should be sealed by her leader's death this chapter is finally closed. There is no escape within the four corners of this special issue. It may be said that Mr. Gandhi is not the voice of India: he speaks for a fraction, which some might put at a third, and others more nearly at twice that proportion. But there come electrical moments when one is compelled to realise that this strange man has the genius that can by a dramatic act rally India to himself and give to his voice the resonance of legions. With this voice we must converse while there is still breath in this body.

It will be said that even if the dangers are as great as we suggest no government can alter its award because one fanatic threatens to commit suicide on the doorstep. But we do not suggest that the Government should climb down on their award. We urge that the moment is ripe for the personal intervention of Mr. MacDonald into the whole tragic muddle in India. Only a personal intervention overriding the accepted forms of official intercourse is likely to move Mr. Gandhi, who will not desire to die if he can see hope of avoiding the internal disruption which he fears. If Mr. MacDonald were now to intervene with a general amnesty in his hand and an offer of renewed negotiations there would be a revival of hope such as there was when Lord Irwin moved India, though it was but for a moment, by his promise of a conference on equal terms. Mr. Gandhi has lifted India's affairs to a plane of tragic emotion. We cannot deal with him, or cope with the consequences of his act, save by stepping ourselves out of the rut of habit.

BAYONETS OR FACTION IN GERMANY?

By Our Berlin Correspondent.

THE scene in the Reichstag last Monday gave journalists in Berlin the best story they have had for years. The accelerating absurdity of the situation was almost beyond description. First the Communists demanded to alter the order of the day so that they might attack the policy of the Government. A deputy, Leicht, was to have spoken against them, but refrained, at the instigation, it seems, of Göring himself, the President of the Reichstag, who expected dissolution. Owing to Leicht's silence the forty supporters of the Government allowed the Communist change, which required unanimity, to be made. The Nazi, Frick, then demanded half an hour's adjournment, as breathing space in which to recover from the shock. In this half-hour the Government hastily decided on dissolution, " because the danger existed " that their policy might be vetoed. Göring then refused to allow the Chancellor to declare the Reichstag dissolved until Papen's Cabinet had been heavily defeated. It is morally, and perhaps constitutionally, untenable that a Government professing to fit into the Weimar framework should have the right to dissolve a Reichstag which has already condemned it by 512 votes to 42. The Chancellor had been unable to speak in the Reichstag, upon whose confidence he is supposed to depend; he betook himself to the wireless to express his feelings. His speech was broadcast in exactly the tone of a Victorian school-mistress, who, having had an impertinent practical joke played upon her, has lost her temper. It began jerkily, and ended with the slightly hysterical sniff of the lady retreating into the staff-room. " Now, children, there's nothing for it—you must pull yourselves up and believe in God; you ought to know that I am acting only for your good," was the tone of the speech of the German Chancellor to his people, at a moment when he was cursing the indignity which Germany suffered at Versailles. It would have been so easy to have taken up an attitude of unconcern with the pranks of school-children.

Despite his pettiness, despite the outrageous impertinence of his claim to represent the people, Papen's position is probably stronger than it was when he took office; he personally is less regarded as " puppet Papen," and his Cabinet has gained in justification. They are riding the mounting wave of nationalism, on the whole, with success. The Germans were unimpressed by Lausanne, but the claim for equality in armaments, well stressed by the Chancellor in his broadcast speech as Germany's right to live burning within her soul, is immensely popular. The Socialists have gone Nationalist, too, these days.

At first the Papen-Schleicher Government could claim to interpret the national will as the patrons of the Brown Army. Their open quarrel with the Nazis, who are therefore going farther and farther to the Left, seems an unparalleled piece of clumsiness. The result is to give Hitler fresh fuel for a flickering flame. It was impossible not to admire the heights of demagogy to which " the Leader " soared in his speech at Munich on September 7th. " We cannot share in this Government," he declared " because we are fighting against a State based on rank and class," and, pointing to his storm troops, " There stand the new nobles of the nation, who have struggled these thirteen years for its liberation." Yet the Nazis are, on the whole, revealing themselves only as the most eloquent of the factions of Germany, and in so far as Papen cried out against factiousness and personal abuse in politics, his speech was strong. " If the Nazis insist on reviving the Class War they will be disappointed," he said, " for the Communists play that game better." It is interesting to see in a Government organ, the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, the hope that the Government may yet come to terms with the Nazis.

Every political party, with the sole exception of the Nationalists, who more or less represent the Government, has attacked the economic programme of the Emergency Decrees of September 4th, which were so overwhelmingly defeated on Monday. From the Communists, who cried " Down with the Starvation Government " in the Reichstag, and on September 7th attacked the programme as a gift of " five and a half milliard marks to the rich," to the Nazis, who are saying much the same without having their papers suppressed in consequence, the attack on wages is condemned. In soberer fashion, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* has pointed out that the reduction of wages and hours together might, in many cases, reduce purchasing capacity, although it is to be accompanied by a transference of workers from receiving a dole to earning a wage. A factory which is already working forty hours a week with, say, 100 workers earning one mark an hour, pays out 4,000 marks in wages. According to the Government plan it will be encouraged to take on, say, twenty-five more workers at 8.75 marks the hour, and would thus pay out 350 marks more in the week. But a factory which reduced its hours from forty-eight to forty, while taking on the twenty-five new hands, would pay out 450 marks less in the week. The presumption that recovery has begun, and many other features of the Government plan, deserve stern criticism. The Nazis and the Centre, after long negotiations, agreed in disliking the wage proposals. The Socialists have cried out in indignation. Yet no one has a really practical alternative to offer, since Marxian measures are out of the question in Germany to-day. One may laugh at a Government which wishes to build up credit and confidence on suspicion and hatred, yet most of the industrialists are pleased, and the Bourse has shown its confidence in Papen. Even on Tuesday, and in spite of American pressure on Monday, it stood firm. For better or for worse, the economic programme will go through, supported by the *entrepreneurs* to whom the Chancellor appealed against the Socialist alternative. One should remember that Papen's quarrel with Hitler has thus successfully robbed the Nazis of the money which they had until recently received from Big Business.

The intrigues which have gone on between the two sessions of the new Reichstag have offered an unedifying spectacle to the onlooker. It is unquestionable that the Social Democrat leaders were bitterly humiliated in the eyes of their followers by the Prussian *coup d'état* of July 20th, and that the Party is still suffering from this. The projected alliance between Centre and Nazis was as unprincipled as a Fox-North coalition, however strong the case for opportunism may have been. On Monday, if the Reichstag had shown any unity of purpose, what a superb tennis court oath might have been sworn! A general strike, with 75 per cent. (this was about the anti-capitalist vote on July 31st) of the nation behind it, might have been effective even against Schleicher and a slump. But as soon as they left the Reichstag the deputies fell into their warring groups, each turning down the other's suggestion, and registering a separate protest. One would have thought Göring would have relished the role of Mirabeau, but when the Nazi leaders were questioned as to their intentions they replied that they were merely amused, and the next day Göring followed the

other parties in recognising the dissolution. Nobody attaches any importance to the committee for guarding the people's rights which the Socialist Löbe called together on Monday evening. The Government refused to meet it.

In Papen's speech and Gayl's declaration there was an intimation that the "presidial" Government will feel no great anxiety to hold new elections within the constitutional sixty days. Papen swore by God and the President; these great authorities will show him the People's will without the Reichstag's help. He has pronounced the liberal epoch of Weimar to be at an end. The Communists, of course, have the real laugh, for Clara Zetkin and Torgler are the heroes of this Reichstag—but the Government have the troops. The Nazi *Angriff* cries out that "one can't sit long on bayonets," but what is there to shake the masters of the Reichswehr? That Germany seems to have no choice between faction and force is her tragedy. E.W.

THE MONETARY POLICY OF THE LABOUR PARTY—I

THERE has recently appeared a convincing and acceptable proof of the continued vitality of the Labour Party—a penny pamphlet, the first of four, entitled, *The Labour Party Policy Report No. 1, Currency, Banking and Finance*. It contains the text of four Resolutions for the forthcoming Annual Conference at Leicester, with a short supporting brief. The fourth resolution is a vague one asking for undefined emergency powers "to deal with any attempt by private financial institutions to obstruct a Labour Government, damage national credit, or create a financial panic." The other three deserve more attention than they have yet received. For they set forth a moderate and quite practicable monetary policy for adoption by the political party which represents the only organised body of opinion outside the National Government, and which will therefore be called on some day, presumably, to form an alternative government.

The first resolution plumps in favour of a sterling currency which would aim primarily at stability of value in terms of wholesale prices, and, only secondarily and to the extent that it is compatible with the first aim, at stability of value in terms of an international standard such as gold. I believe that this is a right decision. The true character of the choice before us is somewhat obscured if we express it as being for or against a gold standard. The real alternatives are a managed sterling currency (though there would be nothing to prevent other countries within or without the Empire from linking up with sterling), and a managed, or more probably half-managed, international currency which in practice would certainly turn out to be based on gold (or just possibly on gold and silver). A properly managed international standard would, however, seem to be quite outside practical politics for many years ahead. Perhaps it will never come, unless we first of all institute a managed sterling standard to show the world—which in these matters is still a generation behind even our own Bank of England—how the thing works. Moreover, a national sterling currency might be so managed as to secure the best of both worlds, except at times of great instability in the value of the international currency; and at such times we should be glad enough to be rid of the tie with gold. For I conceive that the Bank of England would continue to maintain gold reserves against emergencies and for the settlement of temporary adverse balances with the rest of the world, and would also have at all times definite buying and selling prices for gold (though with wider gold points than at present), the gold-value of sterling being, however, not irrevocably fixed but subject to alteration in accordance with circumstances. Thus in practice the sterling standard would work out differently from a gold standard only on the occasions when gold was misbehaving itself.

Our own authorities, as typified by Mr. Neville Chamberlain and Mr. Montagu Norman, are not won over in their hearts from an ultimate return to gold as their goal and their ideal; though they will be much more careful this time than they were last time. For they conscientiously disbelieve in the whole order of ideas for which the alternative policy stands. It is, therefore, a matter of first-class importance that the progressive, experimental policy should be expressly endorsed by the second Party in the State. Fortunately events are trending this way; and it will, in fact, be the doubting Mr. Norman (doubting, not prejudiced, for he is an empiricist with whose scepticism dogma would be incompatible) who will have the first shot at trying to carry out the policy which is not his own choice.

At the same time, in endorsing the Labour Party's recommendation one must emphasise the great difficulties in the way of a successful management of sterling. It is not so easy as some of its advocates would, under the influence of a crude interpretation of the quantity theory, ask us to believe; and we must be content at first with something far short of perfection. It will, I think, require the exercise of a new technique, including, especially, a large measure of control over the volume of new investment.

The Labour Party's second resolution relates to the nationalisation of the Bank of England. This time they have left in abeyance their former proposal to nationalise the Joint Stock Banks. Wisely and prudently in my opinion. For, in the first place, the control of the Big Five, otherwise than through the Bank of England, is not necessary for the purpose of handling the vital controls, whilst as a piece of Socialism it belongs to a late stage of socialisation and is not one of the indispensable first measures. In the second place, I would lay ten to one that, were it a plank of the Labour platform, it would nevertheless be dropped as soon as the party assumed office, because of the obviously great difficulties of executing it relatively to the results to be achieved; and it is most important that this time the Labour programme should include some measures which there is a chance of their attempting to carry out in office. The proposal to nationalise the Big Five is first-class if conceived as a piece of irritation policy, but it is not at this stage serious business.

As regards the Bank of England the second resolution provides:

> That the Bank of England should be brought under public ownership and control; and that the Governor of the Bank should be appointed by the Government and be subject to the general direction of a Minister of Cabinet rank, who should in turn be responsible to the House of Commons for banking policy; the day-to-day business of the Bank being carried on by the Governor and his subordinates.

It is not unnatural, after what has occurred, that this resolution should have been so drafted. But we should, I think, consider carefully exactly what we want. I would lay down five propositions as embodying the essentials:

(1) The interest of private shareholders in the profits of the Bank, nominal though it now is, should altogether cease.

(2) The Bank should be expressly recognised as a National Institution from which private profits and private interests are entirely excluded. The Directorate should be selected on public grounds and should not stand for the interests of the City any more than for other national interests.

(3) The management of the Bank should be ultimately subject to the Government of the day and the higher appointments should require the approval of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

(4) The principles of the currency system, e.g., whether or not the standard should be gold, or whether stability of wholesale prices or of the cost of living or of some other index, is to be its norm, should be determined by Parliament.

(5) The day-to-day policy of the Bank, its statistics, its technique and its immediate aims and objects should be as public as possible, and should be deliberately exposed to outside criticism.

But if these propositions are accepted I should complete them with a sixth, namely:

(6) The less direct the democratic control and the more remote the opportunities for parliamentary interference with banking policy the better it will be.

If the Bank of England is to carry out the monetary policy which is proposed in this pamphlet, it will be engaged in the practice of a very difficult technique, of which Parliament will understand less than nothing. A planned economy will be impracticable unless there is the utmost decentralisation in the handling of the expert controls. I would suggest to the Labour Party that the demand for democratic interference is not Socialism but an echo of nineteenth-century Liberalism. Perhaps, however, I am interpreting the term "banking policy" in the resolution in a more particular sense than is intended.

Moreover, it has been the recent policy of the Bank of England, rather than its powers or structure, which has been at fault. Its independence and its prestige are assets. Nor, in spite of its origins and the opportunity for interested motives on the part of the directorate, can its public spirit over the last decade be called in question. The demand for its subjection to the democracy largely arises, I think, out of peculiarities of recent years which will not characterise a normal regime. More often than not since the war the country has possessed no defined standard and not even a defined monetary policy laid down by Parliament; with the consequence that the Bank of England has been left free to exercise, though it has not been loth to exercise, a wider discretion than it ought to have or has had in the past or will have in the future, on matters which go far beyond the practice of a technique for the attainment of a purpose, the general character of which has been laid down by higher authority. The widespread feeling that the Bank of England is an irresponsible body exercising arbitrary power without marked success, has also been much accentuated by the mixed autocracy and mystery, as it appears to the outside world, of Mr. Montagu Norman. But I am not sure that the blame here, too, is not laid at the wrong door. Mr. Norman has often, in my opinion, been ill-judging, not in the details of his technique, of which he has shown himself a great master, nor in his disinterestedness or chivalry or devotion to the public interest, for he is a great public servant, but in his advice as to the main lines of policy, the choice of which, as distinct from the execution, was not properly his affair at all but that of the Government of the day. But Mr. Norman is not an autocrat. It has been by his influence with successive Chancellors of the Exchequer and with his own colleagues, by his charm and by his powers of persuasion—gifts which in a social democracy are not yet forbidden (are they forbidden in the Union of Soviet Republics? Perhaps they are)—that he has attained his ends. A man who can successively induce Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. Philip Snowden, and Mr. Neville Chamberlain to feed out of his hand, unfortified by success, preaching unpopular and austere courses, would be important under any form of Government. With the personalities the same and knowledge no greater, it might not have made much difference if the machinery which the Labour Party desires had been in operation during the last ten years. J. M. KEYNES.

[Next week Mr. Keynes will deal with the Labour Party's Third Resolution, which proposes the setting up of a National Investment Board.]

A LONDON DIARY

SIR JOHN SIMON'S reputation as a great lawyer and advocate is never likely to suffer change. But I doubt whether any Foreign Secretary since the war has had so unenviable a reputation abroad. Sir Austen Chamberlain was accounted a disaster to the League by many people, but no one doubted that the views he expressed were personally and honestly held. In Sir John Simon's case, I am told by one person after another on their return from Geneva, statements which no doubt do in fact represent his own sincere view, are so expressed as to give the impression that they are purely those of a barrister speaking to a brief. Whose brief? I asked. The answer is that the brief, though endorsed by the Cabinet, is known to come from the Committee of Imperial Defence on which there is a large majority of service representatives. We cannot really expect any change of British armament or Far Eastern policy while this situation remains.

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One example of the kind of thing in British policy which the small nations complain of. Sir John explained that the British were in favour of making arrangements for the total abolition of aerial bombing as an inhuman and abominable practice. But when asked afterwards whether this prohibition was to include bombing, not of sovereign States in time of war but of native villages in time of peace, he disclaimed any such intention. The point is likely to be hotly debated at Geneva when the question of our giving up the Iraq mandate in favour of the Arab Government is discussed. In order to make a show of having settled the minority problem in Iraq, the Kurds, who are about 40 per cent. of the population, have been quieted by bombing operations. The most scandalous fact is that we have used *time-delayed bombs*. The wretched inhabitants (who, ironically enough, persistently petition the League not to allow this country to leave off protecting them from the Arabs) rush away from their villages when the aeroplanes arrive, and return to their demolished homes, only themselves to be blown up by time-delayed bombs. I state this categorically on the authority of an eye-witness. We shall hear more of this matter before long.

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One of the most interesting features of the psychology of nationalism is the manufacture of the inevitable "hereditary" enemy. It is convenient for Governments, as well as satisfying to public opinion, to have some foreign Power which can be represented as the Devil, a State to which the ordinary rules of decency do not apply, one which is perpetually dangerous, justifying the upkeep of armaments and the beating of the nationalist drum. England's hereditary enemy used to be France, in 1853 it changed to Russia, and became Germany from 1904-1914. On the Continent France and Germany have for centuries been traditional foes. But in this connection Herr Paulus Lenz, who represents the quite considerable German Catholic Peace League, made an interesting point in his speech at the International Peace Conference on Tuesday night. The intensely militarist Government now running Germany is doing its best to divert German opinion from its traditional hostility to France and deliberately representing Poland as the "hereditary" enemy, though Poland had no existence as a State for more than a century before Versailles. Of course there is plenty for General von Schleicher to build upon—the intense feeling about Danzig and the Corridor and the ludicrously military character of the Polish State. But the fact that he should direct national feeling away from France and towards Poland, which has initialled a pact of non-aggression with Russia, suggests a possible new grouping of European Powers.

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We are now a country enjoying all the amenities and imbecilities which Customs officials have the pleasant right to impose upon us under a "protective" tariff. Here is a good example of how they are protecting trade. A publisher of my acquaintance a few months ago sent to New York about 400 blank envelopes to be addressed there free of charge in order to send out in them to persons living in America the prospectus of a technical book which he was publishing. The envelopes after being addressed were returned to this country for despatch. His idea was to increase the sale of the book and, therefore, of British exports. In June, 100 of the addressed envelopes were returned to him and the Customs said nothing. But in July, when the balance was returned to him, they demanded that he pay 7s. duty. He refused, and was then required to fill up forms and to state "the nature and value of any process carried out abroad." What was the value of the process by which an American addressed 400 envelopes free of charge proved an insoluble problem, but my friend was none the less forced, under protest, to pay 7s. duty in order to get his envelopes without interminable correspondence and intolerable delay.

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The selling-up of England in job lots goes on, just as if it did not matter. Sometimes I wonder whether in the long run anything really matters as much. A bad girl, as Topsy M.P. once pointed out, will grow up or die before long, but a bad building may last a century. I notice that another fine estate in Dorset—one of the least touched counties—has gone, and that in the case of another sale in Sussex the builder says that he intends to "preserve the beauty spots." I suppose that is something to be thankful for. But is it? The beauty of England is not in spots. Miles of landscape can be ruined by one row of ill-placed houses, while properly planned a whole village can be built in the same stretch of country without damage. I have just spent the week-end in a village on the edge of the South Downs. The village itself actually enhances the loveliness of the place. But up the sides of the Downs, indeed, even on the skyline itself, the bungalows and villas sprawl at all angles, with wire fences and corrugated iron sheds in the very ugliest, most destructive kind of muddle. No one is to blame: everyone is to blame. It is just individualism at its maddest. If we hated the Downs, instead of boasting of them as one of our national glories, we could not contrive more effective damage. We do not hate them: we merely obliterate their outline and mangle their faces. I would keep quiet if it were too late to do anything. But there is still much unspoilt country in England.

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I have heard a good deal of speculation about whether Mr. Arthur Henderson is really sufficiently recovered from his illness to be able to lead the Labour Party in the future. Several friends who have been in almost daily contact with him during the last few months assure me that Mr. Henderson is not only recovered but probably actually better in health than he has been for years past. The Swiss doctor who finally discovered the right cure for Mr. Henderson's illness believes that he has completely cleared his system of a poison which had long been upsetting his digestion. During the early stages of the Disarmament Conference Mr. Henderson was far more seriously ill than people in England realised. Once recovery began, he grew visibly more vigorous from day to day. By the end of the Conference he was going at full steam—as some delegates who went off the rails had very good reason to know. If he can also make the Labour Party sit up and sound like better sense, I for one shall be delighted.

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Last night I wanted to discuss the subject matter of a paragraph of this diary with a friend. I rang him up on an automatic 'phone and immediately found myself listening-in to an animated conversation. I recognised both voices: they belonged to fellow-contributors to this paper and the subject of their conversation was, oddly enough, the very subject I had meant to discuss. I promptly butted in and we carried on a long three-cornered discussion. Now if this is technically possible for three people—or perhaps for four or more—why does not the Post Office arrange a special multiple-conversation service? The advantages for international conferences and for journalists are obvious.

Critic.

PILGRIM'S LANE

It is announced that the London County Council has suggested to the Hampstead Borough Council that Pilgrim's Lane and Worsley Road should be incorporated under one name, and, if this is done, I gather that the name, "Pilgrim's Lane," will disappear from the street-map of London. The residents in the two streets have been asked to express their opinions on the matter, and I shall be surprised if even the most anti-medievalist revolutionary dwelling in Pilgrim's Lane votes for the change. It is true that the Pilgrim after whom the lane is called was not a medieval pilgrim, as most of us have sentimentally supposed. He was a Mr. Charles Pilgrim who lived in the neighbourhood no earlier than the beginning of the nineteenth century. Even so, the name has always conjured up pleasant images in the minds of those who passed down the narrow street. Vague images, perhaps, of almost any kind of pilgrim or pilgrims going on almost any kind of pilgrimage; yet forcible enough to make one feel that a piece of history had delightfully survived in a suburb which was looking less and less like a piece of history with every year that passed.

Like Shepherd's Walk, which is opposite, it gave an air of traditional charm to surroundings not quite worthy of it. Not far off is Well Walk, which rightly or wrongly transports the sentimentalist into the eighteenth century with its name. Higher up are Church Row, Squire's Mount, Judge's Walk, the Spaniards Road, and a score of other places the names of which delude the fancy into pleasure. Is there a single resident in any of these places who would not feel that some virtue had gone out of the place if its name were altered, however pressing the reasons? Well Walk, for instance, runs into Gayton Road as Pilgrim's Lane runs into Worsley Road, and it would undoubtedly be for the convenience of taxi-drivers in search of Well Walk if the two roads were incorporated under a single name. Yet to rename Well Walk "Gayton Road" would be a crime that would stagger the imagination even of war-sick Europe, and to rename Gayton Road "Well Walk" would be an offence against the decencies of history.

I do not think that the objection to changing names is founded merely in a stubborn conservatism. The greatest cities of the world, whatever revolutions they have been through, and whatever novelties they have consented to, have, as a rule, held fast to their traditional names. Rome is still "Roma" to-day as she was in the time of Cicero. Piazzas have been renamed after Mussolini, but no one has suggested that Rome should be named anew in this fashion, nor would he permit it. In Russia we have seen within our own lifetime St. Petersburg altered to "Petrograd" and later to "Leningrad," but the last change was made from a conviction that Russian history was merely at its beginning and that the Revolution marked the first year of a new calendar. All over Europe we have had minor signs of the same belief that the world's great age is beginning anew, and names have been altered so as to make them more fitting to the happy era. Nations have rebaptised themselves under such uncouth appellations as Czecho-Slovakia and Jugo-Slavia, and map-makers have flourished. Ireland has seen Kingstown turned into "Dunlaoighaire" and Queenstown into "Cobh." As Kingstown was "Dunleary" until little more than a hundred years ago, however, and as there is only the faintest historical association between George IV and Ireland, there were excellent historical reasons for restoring the older name. The Dubliner, however, except when he is speaking Gaelic, still calls his city "Dublin"—the Irish for "Blackpool"—and not by the older and official Gaelic name, "Baile Atha Cliath."

All this alteration of names is natural enough for those who are more interested in making history than in remembering it, and who see in a new name a monument to a recent national triumph. At the same time, I think that if I had been an inhabitant of Spalato I should have seen small cause for rejoicing in its transformation into "Split." Common sense bids us be slow to alter the names of places, as the old name of a place never did anybody much harm. The Orangemen of Ulster never wasted their time in renaming towns and villages that were called after Catholic saints. Possibly there is something superstitious in the feeling that nearly every place and every person already possesses the only appropriate name. On the other hand, our feeling in this matter may be partly due to our love of continuity, whether in the name of a place or person or in the policy of a Government. If the rumour of a few years ago that the name of Oxford was to be altered to Morrisville had been true, who is there who would not have felt that the city had surrendered some portion of its beauty? If it were proposed to change the names even of the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, and to bring them more into harmony with the spirit of a materialistic and progressive age, there would be scarcely less passion and excitement roused than was recently stirred up by a proposed alteration of the Book of Common Prayer. Atheists would suddenly realise that there is something sacred in the name of Trinity, and republicans would offer their lives rather than that the name of King's should be rationalised into "President's." It seems to be only County Councils that can feel a perfectly inhuman indifference to names. Perhaps, also, the Post Office, which never shows the slightest regard for our susceptibilities as it alters at will the beloved names of our telephone exchanges.

There could be no stronger proof of our profound attachment to names than the fact that people who possess the most ludicrous names seldom alter them, though this would be easier. During a war, people with names that suggest their origin in a country hostile to the country in which they are living sometimes do so, but the majority cannot be persuaded to abandon the names of their ancestors even by the inconveniences of war time. As for the man with a ludicrous name, he is more likely to change the pronunciation of his name than the name itself. If he is called Juggins, for example, he will loyally remain Juggins, but he will get his friends to pronounce it "Juejins." It is true that a number of people show no great reluctance to change their names if they are offered a legacy on condition that they do so. But that does not prove that they have no real feeling for the sacredness of names. It proves only that they have a very profound sense of the value of money. We are all nominalists up to a point, but even the sincerest nominalist finds himself transformed into a realist by the offer of money. It is in such moments that we perceive—what, as nominalists, we have always doubted—that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. And, after all, women have for centuries willingly surrendered their names at marriage, and only a small minority of the more ardent advocates of the equality of the sexes have had any sense of grievance. What women do for love, men may surely be forgiven for doing for money.

I have not seen it alleged, however, that the inhabitants of Pilgrim's Lane will be any better off financially if Pilgrim's Lane is called something else. Nor have I discovered that anybody else will gain from the proposed alteration. It may be that the County Council intends to call the two roads incorporated "Pilgrim's Lane"; but that would be absurd, since Worsley Road does not bear the remotest resemblance to Pilgrim's Lane. Can it be that someone on the County Council has the passion for change for the sake of change, and sees in this tiny thoroughfare an opportunity for experiment likely to escape the notice and the indignation of the general body of London citizens? Is he practising with the thin end of the wedge in the hope that a public resigned to changes in the names of places will ultimately acquiesce in the incorporation of the Strand and Fleet Street into a single street to be renamed "Woolworth Avenue"? Or is he simply a hater of antiquity who is looking round for streets with names which call up the fragrance of a past age, eager to destroy them one by one? There are some thousands of streets and alleys in London which, having no souls, could bear the loss of their names without a corresponding loss of their souls. But not Pilgrim's Lane or Hanging Sword Alley (which has no soul apart from its name). Not any street, indeed, which has possessed its name for a hundred years. As well rename the Mall or Whitehall and leave London as empty of history as Peacehaven. It is a curious thing that, in a world devoted to memory-training, our vandals are always attempting to destroy the things that are worth remembering. Y. Y.

OTTAWA—THE NEXT STEP

When the members of a family begin to bargain about money matters . . . the unity of the family is not likely to last long.—MR. RAMSAY MUIR.

NOW that the decent, automatic cheers
Which fell like music on our statesmen's ears
When leaving Ottawa, have passed away,
What muttered discontents we hear to-day.
Australian manufacturers upbraid
The "sacrifices" by their spokesmen made;
To all Canadians it seems absurd
That Danish bacon still may be preferred;
And surly Britons grumble low (they would!)
At having taxes laid upon their food.
For bargaining, as Ramsay Muir has said,
On serious matters—such as cash and bread—
Leaves angry passions swollen and inflamed,
Since no one ever gets quite all he claimed.
All this he sees: how strange that he should miss
The logic of his own hypothesis!
For, just as peace requires, as France has shown,
Security defined by her alone,
So would our present discontents have pause
Were each Dominion judge in its own cause.
We've made a start. Some tariffs are agreed
From which Great Britain never may be freed
Save by Dominion leave. Why not transfer
All fiscal sovereignty from Westminster?
Let the Dominions (it is all they ask)
Fix their own quotas; leave to them the task
Of fixing British tariffs, or, at need,
Prohibiting all cargoes that proceed
From foreign ports. Let them, in short, declare
How much Great Britain is to buy, and where,
And at what price; while taking in return
Just what they please (for that's their own concern).
Both parties by a bargain may abide
In perfect peace, if one is satisfied.
The other has his hands securely tied.

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

MR. GANDHI'S FAST

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—England is very much on the verge of a political catastrophe in her relations with India, and the attitude of the British Government on Mr. Gandhi's decision will shape the future of Indo-British friendship. The British Government is working out a constitutional scheme for India not only without the co-operation, but against the active opposition, of the strongest political force in India, viz., the Congress. The Congress viewpoint has been kept on one side, but the Congress itself cannot be kept on one side. The whole position has now been brought to a crisis by Mr. Gandhi's decision "to fast unto death" unless the proposal of separate electorates for the depressed classes is withdrawn by the Government. This was, indeed, intimated by Mr. Gandhi six months ago. It is to be hoped that the British statesmen will not be blind to the most disastrous consequences which are involved in this. However strange the attitude adopted by Mr. Gandhi may appear to the British people, there can be no escape from it by merely ignoring it. The British Government has not sufficiently realised the position which Congress occupies in the Indian mind, nor the fact that the future lies with the younger generation which is becoming increasingly nationalist. Any constitutional arrangements which are made against the views of the national mind will have to be scrapped sooner or later.

Untouchability is India's greatest blot, and Mr. Gandhi's efforts to remove it have been the greatest and the most important also. The British Government which slept over it for all these years cannot now come forward as the sole champions of the depressed classes, and the nationalist Indians' voice in this matter must also be respected. Mr. Gandhi has made it clear in his letter to the Secretary of State for India that he is not opposed to even over-representation for the depressed classes or to give them votes on lower qualifications than those for the rest of the people. But any scheme of separate electorates for them, thus dividing up the country still further, is open to most serious objections on grounds of national well-being and political theory. The interests of the depressed classes are not separate from the interests of the country as a whole, and government on party lines will promote the general welfare far more than government on communal lines. How the members elected from separate electorates can safeguard the interests of their constituents more than the members elected by the depressed classes in general constituencies is beyond any rational thinking. By reservation of seats the depressed classes can have spokesmen from their own classes as much as they can have under separate electorates. A policy of bolstering up the reactionaries and separatists and continually ignoring the nationalist mind in India is bound to fail ultimately before the surging tide of nationalism.

36 Ticehurst Road,
London, S.E.23.

C. A. MEHTA.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I first met Mr. Gandhi three days before he set out on his great march from the Sabamarti Ashram to Dandi. . . . Shortly before Mr. Gandhi left England, I went to see him at 88, Knightsbridge at his special request. He told me that any notion of separate electorate or special seats for the "Untouchables" filled him with horror. I have been well prepared, therefore, for the extreme step he now proposes to take.

If my understanding of Mr. Gandhi's mind and methods is right, his manner of quitting this world is consistent and natural. He is first and foremost a great Hindu reformer. He wishes to transform Hinduism. Against his will and—I think—his judgment he was forced into the political limelight. High politics he does not understand. The proceedings of the Round Table Conference bored him. When he conferred with Lord Irwin before the Congress made its final decision not to participate in the first Round Table Conference, he made Prohibition one of the eleven points of the Congress demands. When he was released from Yeravda gaol and the press of the entire world was waiting to quote his first public utterance almost *verbatim*, he spoke again of Prohibition. And he was certainly not "stunting." As a politician Mr. Gandhi may be muddle-headed and inconsistent. But ever since I came to know him I have been convinced of his true greatness, because of his adherence to a few dominant ideas.

First of these ideas is non-violence. But for the imposition of this idea upon his followers India would have become a hundredfold more bloodstained than Ireland several years ago. There is no need to labour his philosophy of non-violence here; but he has gone very near to making it the "moral equivalent for war" which, according to William James, the world is seeking.

The second of these ideas is the reform of Hinduism from within, and this, I think, really explains his decision to "starve unto death." He is the Mahatma. He knows that when he is dead he will be far more powerful than he has ever been during his lifetime. Can he direct the inevitable legend into a proper channel? He has not much longer to live. The average caste-Hindu does not share his detestation of the stigma of "untouchability." Suppose he should die, not for the sake of some unprofitable opposition to the British raj—which in any event Hinduism will long outlive—but as a reminder that the outcaste has the moral right to be a fully-fledged member of Hindu society? Surely, that is his reason. He is too sane a man to believe that the abandonment of special seats for the "Untouchables" automatically destroys the distinction between the caste-Hindu and the outcaste.

Already, certain sections of the press have referred to Mr. Gandhi's "stunt." That cannot be helped. In any case his "stunt" is for Indians rather than for Englishmen. Englishmen would be rash if they claimed to understand the Hindu mind completely, but at least they can take pride in the fact that the letters of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Sir Samuel Hoare to the prisoner in Yeravda Gaol have been reasonable, straightforward, and, above all, courteous.

2 Mitre Court Buildings,
E.C.4.

J. R. GLORNEY BOLTON.

THE FUTURE OF THE LABOUR PARTY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—There is something to be said for Mr. Laski's contention that in order to achieve "the Socialist conquest of economic power . . . large scale constitutional changes will be necessary." As Lord Balfour pointed out (in the introduction to Bagehot's *The English Constitution*), "Our alternating Cabinets, though belonging to different Parties, have never differed about the foundations of society. And it is evident that our whole political machinery presupposes a people so fundamentally at one that they can safely afford to bicker." Mr. Laski invites the Labour Party to abandon Fabianism and commit itself to a policy of social and economic revolution. If the Labour Party accepts his advice the fundamental unity between the chief Parties would no longer exist and consequently our present Parliamentary system of government would be unable to function.

If the Labour Party secures a majority, the first constitutional change is to be the abolition of the House of Lords. This is to be achieved by making their acceptance of office conditional on the Crown granting the right to create an unlimited number of peers. An omnipotent Labour majority in the House of Commons will then have a free hand to bring about "the Socialist conquest of economic power." But, as Mr. Laski perceives, there is still another constitutional snag to be dealt with. Under the existing Law there must be a dissolution of the House of Commons in five years. An ungrateful country might return a "capitalist" majority who would at once undo the good work of their Socialist predecessors in office. Mr. Laski, however, has his solution of this problem. He asks "whether, in a period of transition to Socialism, a Labour Government can risk the overthrow of its measures as a result of the next general election." It follows, therefore, the five year limit must be suspended or abolished. The Socialist majority will then continue in power until by a counter revolution, in the South American fashion, it is replaced by another group of dictators.

I have too much faith in the political good sense of the average Englishman, whether he is a supporter of the Labour Party or otherwise, to believe that at the bidding of Mr. Laski he will light-heartedly destroy that indigenous system of Parliamentary self-government which with all its defects is well adapted to the peculiar genius of this country.

If, however, the Labour Party adopts Mr. Laski's scheme it is of vital importance, as he himself suggests, that the electorate should be made aware of the results which would follow from a Labour majority at the next election.

With the enormous increase in the electorate there must be a larger proportion of the total electors with no definite Party affiliations whose vote, like mine, is determined by what we conceive to be the dominant issue at the election. We are, therefore, entitled to know whether a vote for a Labour Party will be a vote for carrying out such "large-scale constitutional changes" as will in effect destroy our present methods of self-government.

C. R. V. COUTTS.

25 Moorgate, E.C.2.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Is it permissible to remind Mr. Garlick that not so very long ago (to be precise, from 1914 to 1918) nearly all of that million "unemployable" were actually employed? Those who were not engaged in military service or the production of munitions of war were filling the gaps left by others in more normal industrial occupations; and although some of these "temporary" employees were, as might be expected, less efficient than those whom they were replacing for the time, it is certain that the "mental deficiency, atavism, and lack of will" which Mr. Garlick holds to be their characteristics, were by no means apparent.

These indisputable facts admitted, Mr. Garlick's biological and psychological postulates seem to dissolve into very thin air. One need not quarrel with the dogma that "there is as definite a relation between the 'under dog' and mental deficiency, etc., as there is between exaggerated wealth and greed and selfishness." It may be so: but even so the connection is seen upside down in Mr. Garlick's analysis. Exaggerated wealth is a *cause* of greed and selfishness more often than an effect; and the state of being an "under dog" leads to the evils which Mr. Garlick ascribes to the Creator of biological and psychological laws.

When we are intelligent enough to give the opportunity of honourable work to the two million "unemployed" in our country to-day, it will be time enough to consider whether half of them, or any of them, are "unemployable." Perhaps Mr. Garlick would call such a proceeding "subsidising them by capital." If so, may one ask to what more natural and obvious use "capital" should be devoted? FRED HUGHES.

87 Herongate Road, E.12.

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am in general sympathy with your article on Crime and Punishment, but I shall be glad to be allowed to make some observations on that part which deals with imprisonment for non-payment of wife maintenance or bastardy orders. I, of course, agree that no one should be imprisoned without evidence of capacity to pay, but the cause of incapacity has also to be taken into consideration. In a case recently before our bench a gentleman having begotten twin bastards married a lady (not the mother) before they were born but when pregnancy was advanced. Which lady has the prior claim? Our practice in these cases is always to hear evidence as to capacity to pay, and then if satisfied to pass sentence of imprisonment but suspend its operation so long as payment is made. This often proves effective. J.P.

National Liberal Club.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I read Mr. Blair's interesting article on this subject in your last issue. He seems to have some kind of grievance against the L.C.C. and against the various ameliorating influences that tend to make these places a little more civilised. To take the last point first, it is obvious that the mission services he refers to would never be allowed unless they were approved by the inhabitants. Not even in a common lodging house can people who have no real business there force an entry. It follows, therefore, that the proprietors find it to their advantage to sanction these services.

Mr. Blair conveys the impression that the majority of common lodging houses are overcrowded and insanitary. Certainly the L.C.C. do their best to prevent these conditions. In the matter of bed-spacing Mr. Blair is curiously illogical. The profound import of the three-feet rule is its absolute prevention of real overcrowding. Mr. Blair can work this out for himself. With adequate means of entry and of (compulsory) alternative fire-escape, the result, after allowing 9ft. 6in. of ceiling height, is 350 (or thereabouts) cubic feet per person. The L.C.C. rightly insist on this, and as 400 cu. ft. is the normal minimum for small rooms, and is often found in private houses of the better class, 350 cannot be called overcrowding in a large dormitory.

I hold no brief for the L.C.C., but as I was architect to a women's lodging home of the better kind which was built in 1908, I had to build to their requirements, which I thought at the time were strict, but which I realised ultimately were sound in every respect. I could make this letter too long by dealing with other points, but one should be mentioned. The L.C.C. require that the walls and ceilings of common lodging houses shall be completely whitewashed once a year, and their inspectors enforce this with considerable severity. However irksome this may be to the proprietors of a clean lodging house, it is certainly a salutary requirement for the other kind.

In the measures they were able to take under their General Powers Act, the L.C.C. have shown themselves saviours of society. Thirty years ago there were no beds in common lodging houses, only "bunks"—frames enclosing coarse mattresses on the floor, with American cloth coverings. With the compulsory introduction of beds with blankets, washing and sanitary accommodation, and clean rooms, there has arisen a more self-respecting type of lodger. The pressure of corporate opinion is too strong and the very dirty people tend to get crowded out, or to mend their ways. There is a certain amount of grandmotherly legislation in the control of every public body, but the L.C.C. found the common lodging house a festering sore. Their treatment of it, under the wise and skilful guidance of their medical officers, is worthy of all praise. They would be the first to admit that much more might be done, but this applies to many other things also. The common lodging house is not the only evil under the sun. THEODORE FYFE.

Cambridge.

CHILE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Recently Chile has been appearing in the news pages more frequently than the affairs of this republic usually warrant, and comments upon her revolutions have been made in your weekly notes.

I have read the accounts of these happenings in Chile in a number of newspapers and in almost every case the report had been grossly exaggerated. The few grains of truth each contained were almost lost amid the wild surmises and foolish rumours.

One instance may be given. The thin shower of volcanic ash that fell over a small section of this country in April was written up in lush verbiage in the *Daily Mirror.* There was the inevitable picture with the X marking the volcano that was pouring forth the ashes. This picture was easily identified as a postcard of the Santiago Race Course with its mountainous background. The particular peak that had been marked was not a volcano. Indeed the volcano that was in eruption was over 200 miles away.

It is not very important perhaps, that these affairs of Chile should be so foolishly reported. There is, however, a more vital matter involved. Where I have been able to check the newspaper reports with my knowledge of what actually happened I find that they are only approximately 25 per cent. true.

I conclude that most of the news I read is equally false. If so the danger of misunderstanding and arousing harmful prejudices in a world already not quite sane is of incalculable gravity.

It would be interesting to have the opinion of others of your foreign readers as to the accuracy of the reports published of events that occur in their territory. GRINGO.

Valparaiso, Chile.

STATE ASSISTANCE TO AGRICULTURE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have reached home after a long absence and find Captain McDougal's letter in your issue of September 3rd.

He is right in saying that the good farmer on the best land will benefit by State assistance, but does this truth seriously affect the issue? The aid is not for the small minority; it is for the large majority that struggles with land fit for corn and roots rather than grass or permanent pasture. The effect should be to keep men in employment and land in heart.

If stock-keeping be the sole purpose of intelligent farming, how long shall we farm? A reference to prices in the current returns of the Ministry of Agriculture will supply a serious answer to this question. Few farmers make money out of meat; the butchers take the profits.

Why attack the landlord? His plight to-day is as bad or worse than that of his tenants, and as a class he has played the game and done his best in terribly difficult circumstances. I read last week in the *Manchester Guardian* of one landowner whose gross income is £35,000 a year and his net income £4,000. A letter on my desk tells me of another who will have 5,000 acres on his hands at Michaelmas, because his tenants cannot carry on at any price. Look round at what were called "the stately homes of England." Some are shut, a few have been pulled down, others are let to schools.

Rent is a large item only on very high-class land that can afford to carry it, and the Government owes the industry more than it has paid, or proposes to pay, for the repeal of the Corn Production Act. Because a few men benefit by a sound income, shall that move be condemned? The Conversion of War Loan is praised, but thousands of speculators have made easy money out of the consequent rise in Government securities.

The landlord and tenant system may be sound or rotten, but to say that agriculture cannot thrive under it is to forget Coke of Norfolk, "Turnip" Townshend, and scores of other pioneers. Nor is the State the landlord one would choose. S. L. B.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS' UNION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—So good a friend of peace as Mr. J. L. Hammond has recently spoken of the "cumbrous and dilatory machinery" of the League of Nations. He might have spoken still more severely of the League of Nations Union, which works with so little effect that many of us are in despair.

The chief cause of this futility is probably to be found in the fact that the Union is hampered by its "friends." It is ostentatiously patronised, and therefore stultified, by leading men from every party, none of whom will ever move farther than the supposed interests of their party will allow them. No success will be gained until the Union throws off these swaddling bands, and appears as an independent organisation, disregarding party ties altogether, running its own candidates, and pursuing its own policy. Thus, and thus only, did the Anti-Corn-Law League and the Suffrage Movement achieve their triumphs. For example, the instant it was seen that Sir John Simon had betrayed the cause of disarmament at Geneva, a disarmament candidate ought to have been let loose on Sir John's constituency, standing as a League of Nations Union candidate pure and simple, subsidised by the Union, and supported by its speakers. He would, very possibly, not win the seat. But he would be an evidence that the Union meant something, and was determined no longer to be put off with lip-service. A dozen such candidates would do more in a few weeks than the Union, with its system of trying to please everybody, has done in years.

National Liberal Club. E. E. KELLETT.

MUNICIPAL HOUSING

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—If local authorities are to economise, may I suggest one way by which substantial savings can be made in municipal budgets?

As matters now stand, municipal housing schemes will soon be more or less a thing of the past. The Minister of Health's recently announced decision disallowing the compulsory acquisition of 1,300 acres of land at Wythenshawe by the Manchester Corporation seems to indicate pretty conclusively that the Government has decided, for the time being at any rate, to check municipal building. But the building of houses must continue. Why shouldn't local authorities encourage building societies to fill the gap?

There is an opportunity here for municipalities to co-operate far more closely than in the past with building societies. Building societies have the experience and the resources to do much of what is necessary. By utilising them local authorities should be able to secure effective economies in local expenditure out of public funds. Where local authorities are anxious to encourage the building of houses they can obtain authority to give guarantees to prospective purchasers who have not themselves sufficient capital to go direct to building societies. Where this scheme is already in operation it has worked admirably, and an extension of it should mean both the speeding up of house building and a reduction of cost to local authorities.

Relations between local authorities and building societies are happily of the most cordial, and at a time when many of the former are the objects of a good deal of criticism, much of it ill-informed and undeserved, I must say that those of them which have come within my personal experience seem to me to be carrying out their duties under the greatest difficulties in a manner that is at once efficient and public-spirited.

1 Finsbury Square, E.C.2. H. L. NATHAN.

"PROGRESSIVE"

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have been much fascinated and intrigued by the nomenclature of the Federation of Progressive Persons and Societies, whose honorary secretary has been writing to you and of which, being an ignoramus, I had not previously had the good fortune to hear. I have, for long, wanted to hear a definition of Progress, and from books, alas! it is notoriously difficult to extract an agreed answer. But the P.P.S. are presumably fraternally united by an accepted formula. I have a dim idea that I know what a Progressive Person looks like, but I am most anxious to know how he, or she, should be defined. Would the Federation's secretary divulge what, after all, must be an important metaphysical truth? And Progress, too: radio for convicts, seven shillings, instead of five, in the pound for income-tax, free education from three instead of five, not eating meat, not wearing clothes—all these I have recently heard spoken of as Progressive. Is a belief in all these tenets obligatory within the Federation? And if so, what about such faiths and practices as have been known to claim the same proud label yet must be difficult for members to reconcile with some of those I have instanced—as, for example, eating uncooked meat or wearing woollen clothes? And if not, what Pope pronounces on the rival claims? GODFREY ELTON.

Greenways, Old Headington,
Oxford.

THE MUSIC SEASON

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have discovered that in writing last week about the forthcoming musical season I did not notice that the B.B.C. Symphony Concerto included in their programme a first performance of a new Concerto for Pianoforte and Orchestra by Dr. Vaughan Williams on February 1 next. This, of course, invalidates my statement that there is not a single new English work in their programme. I much regret this mistake.

Savile Club, W. J. TURNER.
69 Brook Street, W.1.

Miscellany

A QUIET TWELFTH

"BELFAST," said Jimmie Good, of blessed memory, "is the only mediaeval town left in Europe: the only town where they'll fight to the death for a tatter of orange or green." "Belfast," wrote General Lake, Commander-in-Chief of the forces of law and order in Ireland on the eve of '98, "Belfast ought to be proclaimed and severely punished, for I am convinced that every act of sedition in Ireland has its origin in that town." Now this romantic view is not that which Belfast usually takes of itself. Officially, it sees itself as a law-abiding, church-going, Samuel Smiles and self-helping town; it has a City Hall modelled on the Capitol at Washington, and a remarkable system of disposing of its sewage, and has accomplished a good deal more than Geneva in the way of disarmament by removing the cobblestones from its more belligerent streets and replacing them by concrete, so that the night of the Twelfth no longer sees small boys and women uprooting their pavements with pokers and shovels into ammunition dumps for the men already engaged; for there never was a good man on either side but had a good woman behind him. In the gardens round the City Hall the City Fathers stand, the Victorian Economic Man, frock-coated in stone, and round their large and firmly planted feet geraniums spring. But the real Belfast is the Belfast that thrilled with the high note of ecstasy the night of the gun-running at Larne, when car after car sped through the dark along the conscious roads, carrying rifles to be stocked in the lofts of solitary farms, and between the double doors of drawing-rooms in placid country houses; the Belfast that built the lovely lines of the *Titanic* and of Paul Henry's pictures and Robert Lynd's prose: that rocks with laughter in its own theatre at itself in the person of Andy Thompson, expiring amid Celtic faggots in Tir n'an Og, calling like any martyr on the great name of Sir Edward Carson, and shouting *No Surrender!* with his last Protestant breath. There is an uglier Belfast than that, as there is an uglier Dublin than Sean O'Casey's, and it still rears its ugly head: "the late troubles," as this latest Irish playwright calls them, have a way of altering their tense with appalling suddenness. For all that, Police Constable McLaughlin spoke for the town when he bent an enraptured ear to the two old women blackguarding himself and the rent collector from their high window: "Sure it was like music to hear their tongues waggin' again, after the sound of that cursed shootin'. God be with the ould peaceful times when there was a street row at every corner, and a peeler was cock o' the walk."

Hugh Quinn, the author of these three remarkable plays*, is a Belfast man and a Catholic, and it is characteristic of his bewildering province and no less bewildering town that it should be left for him to crystallise in one short play the whole essence of the "Twelfth," the anniversary of the day that William of Orange crossed the Boyne on a white horse, to the discomfiture of the white-livered King James: a glorious, pious, and immortal memory that for days beforehand sets the July twilight throbbing with the drums like the pulsing of blood, and rises on the Twelfth itself with party songs and orange lilies and squealing fifes and heat and dust and marching boots to a corybantic ecstasy. Joe Anderson, Orangeman, and Johnny McShane, Papist, are scandalously good friends. "What right," demands Tam the Weaver, bilious with sedentary living, "has oul' Johnny, a Catholic and the heart's blood of a Fenian, to be tittle-tattlin' with Joe Anderson, an Orangeman and a Free Mason, breed, seed and gineration of him?" All the year round they can drink together in decency and sobriety without lifting their voices, but it wouldn't do, as Mrs. McShane complains, to let the Twelfth go by without making Valentines of themselves for the public gaze. And on this particular morning after the night before, each in anguish of spirit, is preparing to give himself up to the police for murder of the other when the drink was in them. True, imagination has misled them. "Didn't ye blow and blast o' the stirrin' times Joe Anderson an' yourself had trampin' the borders o' Scotland, while all the time the pair o' ye were lyin' fuddled up in a lodgin' house at Portadown, an' ould weemin like postillions on the road carryin' ye porter in tin cans till the money was done?" There is a rapturous recognition, but to oblige Constable Falloon, who hasn't had a case for six months, they submit to arrest for brawling on the King's highway, under conditions that is, for who, Papist or Protestant, would "want to be in the lock-up with the sound of fife and drum bands in the air, and parades and puressions crossin' the main roads?" There is only one shadow of a bat's wing on the play, and it is in the stage directions: "*Time—A fine July 13th morning before the late troubles in Belfast.*"

The same direction in *Mrs. McConaghy's Money*, the most important of these plays, is "*After the late troubles in Belfast*": but the burden is not political. "Ducksy," says Mr. St. John Ervine in his introduction, "must be the first appearance in drama of the new working-class—the dole-drawers . . . to whom the 'buroo', or Labour Exchange, is his father and mother and fairly good God." Now the stage, when it is not prophesying, is usually a year or two late; it takes a little while before the form and pressure of the time are felt behind the footlights. If Ducksy's half-tragic, half-comic figure is indeed a first appearance, it may be because Belfast has known his threadbare jauntiness longer than any town in the United Kingdom. Thanks to the superseding of linen by artificial silk the mills were idle there, long before the general trade silence fell upon the world. "Work?" says Ducksy with a laugh, "where's this A heerd the word before, now that you mention it?" And more sadly, to his sweetheart Aggie: "If the dole was only constant, we cud live rightly along with the money you earn. A'll never get work here. The town's done." Already the old fierce six-to-six working day is looked back upon as a kind of halcyon time. "It's a pity," says Bella; "it wasn't the ould days when we had to get up at five o'clock. A feeble oul' woman like Liza then cud ha' made a right livin' goin' round the dures with a wee hammer rappin' the people up"; and Ducksy, for all his determination not to be "banjoed" of his unemployment pay, his sixpences to the bookies and the pictures, and the "jigs," has his moments of agonised perception. "So help me God, Aggie, A've come to the conclusion that you and me have no right to be livin'. We wud be better off dead. . . . A'm only a young fella and A've seen little, but A'm beginnin' to see this life is a terrible thing when ye're poor." And when old Liza is brought home by Mrs. McConaghy from the poor-house, not from compassion, but because she has insured what promises to be a short life, Mickey rises to a heart-breaking eloquence: "Ye'll read in the papers o' tarrible times here, an' tarrible times there. (*Bitterly shouting*): But there was always tarrible times for the poor, only they never published it in the placards. (*Softly*): To think o' that craythur workin' in the mill since she was nine, glad to creep in to the warmth of a strange fire to end her days, like a harassed cat that the childher have been tormentin', crawlin' under a dure-scraper to die in pace. It's tarrible when ye think o' it."

It is not that Hugh Quinn has any grudge, or any fierce gospel of revolt. But he knows the life round Carrick Hill and Ballymacarret and the Falls, when one is left fatherless, the eldest of a family of six, and one's self eight years old. That was thirty-eight years ago, and if he still has neither riches nor length of days, he has been given what Solomon chose in preference to either—wisdom, and an understanding heart. For this reason there comes for him a sudden transitory glory on these backyards and mean streets, these shrill-tongued women and shiftless men. He sees the heroism in Ducksy's attempt to look "like a coloured supplement . . . a tailor's dummy with the clothes pressed off him an' his pointed shoes hangin' together wi' boot-polish," has heard the melody in the music-hall songs of forty years ago that are the folk-songs of the streets, so that the Good Oul' States of Alabama shine with the promise of Heaven. "That was poor oul' Arthur's last bed," says Bella, looking into the back room where Mrs. McConaghy earns an honest penny by "waking" the houseless dead. "God bless us, he had a desolate look on his face lyin' up in that empty deadhouse. But when he found himself among the neighbours again, an' heard the crack go roun' an' the childher laugh, A thought A saw a comfortable look creep over his face."

O Lord, by these things men live. HELEN WADDELL.

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* *Mrs. McConaghy's Money: A Quiet Twelfth: Collecting the Rent.* Three plays by Hugh Quinn, with an introduction by St. John Ervine. Constable. 7s. 6d.

PELAGEYA

PELAGEYA was an illiterate woman. She didn't even know how to sign her own name.

But the husband of Pelageya was an important Soviet official. And though of humble origin, from the village, during his five years in town he'd learnt all there was to know. The devil alone knows what he didn't know.

And he was extremely ashamed that his wife was illiterate.

"If only, Pelageyushka, you could learn even to sign our surname," he would say to Pelageya. "It's such an easy surname, mine, only two syllables—*Kuch-kin*, and you can't do it . . . it's so embarrassing. . . ."

But Pelageya used to wave him away and answer:

"That's nothing at all for me, Ivan Nikolaievitch. I'm getting on. My fingers don't bend that special way. What should I start studying for, and designing letters, at my time of life? Better let the young pioneers learn, I can reach old age very well as I am."

Pelageya's husband was a terribly busy man and hadn't much time to waste on his wife. So he would just shake his head—eh, you, Pelageya, Pelageya. . . . And that's all he would say.

Yet none the less, one day Ivan Nikolaievitch brought home a very special book.

"Look, Pel'," he said, "the very latest Self-Taught Primer, written according to the most up-to-date methods. I'll help you myself," he said.

And Pelageya just smiled softly, took the Primer in her hands, turned it this way and that and put it away in the cupboard. There, she thought, lie still, you may come in useful for the descendants.

But a day came when Pelageya sat down to needlework. Ivan Nikolaievitch's coat needed mending—his elbow had come through the sleeve.

And down at her table sat Pelageya. Threaded the needle. Put her hand in the lining—hark, something rustles!

"Can it be money ?" wondered Pelageya.

She looked—a letter. Such a clean, tidy envelope, the writing on it so delicate, and the notepaper smelling as if of scent or perhaps even eau-de-Cologne. Pelageya's heart stood still.

"Can it be," she thinks, "that Ivan Nikolaievitch deceives me ? Can it be that he is carrying on a correspondence with Society ladies, and laughing at me, poor illiterate fool ?"

Pelageya looked at the envelope, took out the letter, opened it—but no, she could not make head or tail of it because of her illiteracy.

And for the first time in her life Pelageya was sorry that she did not know how to read.

"Even though," she was thinking, "it's not my letter, yet I must know what is in it. Perhaps its contents will change my whole life, make it better for me to go back to the village—back to work on the farm."

Pelageya burst into tears, she began to remember that Ivan Nikolaievitch seemed altered of late—seemed to be spending much too much time on his moustaches, and washing his hands far too often.

And so Pelageya sat on, looking at the letter and howling like a cow. Read it she couldn't. And to show it to a stranger she was too ashamed.

Presently Pelageya put the letter away in the cupboard, finished mending the coat, and sat waiting for Ivan Nikolaievitch. And when he came in she didn't betray herself, not by the least little sign. On the contrary, she spoke to her husband in calm, level tones, even going so far as to hint to him that she wouldn't mind learning, that she was sick and tired of being a backward, illiterate old woman.

Ivan Nikolaievitch was highly delighted by this.

"Well, that's wonderful," he said. "I'll help you myself."

"Very well then, help me," said Pelageya.

And she stared at the neat, clipped moustaches of Ivan Nikolaievitch.

For two whole months, day after day, Pelageya studied reading. Patiently, syllable by syllable, she put words together, drew the outlines of letters, memorised sentences. And every evening she took out from the cupboard the precious letter, and tried to decipher its mysterious meaning.

However, this was not very easy.

Not until the third month did Pelageya master the science.

That morning, when Ivan Nikolaievitch had left for work, Pelageya took the letter out from the cupboard and began to read it.

Only with difficulty could she make out the delicate handwriting, and only the faint, barely perceptible smell of scent on the paper gave her courage.

The letter was addressed to Ivan Nikolaievitch.

Pelageya read :

RESPECTED COMRADE KUCHKIN,

I am sending you the promised ABC. With its aid I think your wife will be able to master the whole craft completely in about 2-3 months. Promise, my dear, to make her do it. Urge upon her, make clear to her, how disgusting it is to stay an illiterate old woman.

At this very moment, for the next anniversary, we are bending all our energies towards liquidating illiteracy throughout the Republic, yet somehow we are apt to forget those nearest to us.

You simply must do this, Ivan Nikolaievitch, my dear.

With Communist greetings,
MARIA BLOKHINA.

Pelageya read the letter through twice, and then, piteously compressing her lips as though suffering from some secret insult, burst into tears. MIKHAIL ZOSHCHENKO.

(*Translated by I. M. and S. S. N.*)

PLAYS AND PICTURES

It's Not Enough to be Crazy

ANY show with Miss Binnie Hale in it is worth while. Her two acts in *Second Crazy Month* at the Palladium, and an occasional appearance on the stage in between, have a delicious quality which is rare in the music-hall. She burlesques June and Anny Ahlers, a film actress and a Victorian platform singer—the usual tricks of the take-off turn—but her charm is inescapable. What a pity that she appears so little ! There are too many stars in *Crazy Month* with too little to do—except interfere with one another. The result is a sort of animated Frith's *Derby Day* of variety. The second partners in the combinations Nervo and Knox, Naughton and Gold, almost disappear from the scene. John Tilley's name is in the programme, but he hardly does more than walk on. Several good turns—Jasper Maskelyne's conjuring, for example—are merely spoilt by comic interference. One wishes that someone like Dave Apollon, who has a real sense of the music-hall and not merely the ability to splash talent about, could have taken this show in hand. Still, it goes well. The return to slapstick in a burlesque pantomime "Cinderella," is welcome ; Nervo dancing in a brassiere and white gloves is genuinely whimsical ; and Naughton's odd clockwork walk off the stage is as good as ever. In Eddie Gray the Palladium has found a new comedian (new, at least, to me) who wears Harry Tate's moustache but is surprisingly himself. He has a lot to do, from being a fairy godmother to swinging clubs, and is consistently funny without effort. Much the best "crazy" turn is his circus of performing dogs, which lie down when called and instead of jumping into barrels neatly knock them over.

At the Tivoli

Bring 'Em Back Alive is a sensible and honest, rather than exciting film. It is jungle stuff without either massacre or sex-appeal, or too much arch humour, though the commentary might be better than it is. The commentator is a collector of specimens for Zoos, and we accompany him on one of his trapping expeditions through the Malay jungles. The exigencies of a film require him to bring back a good haul of beasts, with the result that his profession is made out to be far easier than it doubtless is. An absence of tenseness is in fact the weakness of a picture which is rather too long and unvaried. The same sequences do service too often. On the other hand, the evident truthfulness of this picture lends it interest. Several sequences shows the beasts, on meeting each other, starting objectless brawls, which they stop through boredom, and start again for no better reason, thus imitating man. There are also some very good sequences of python-life in a film that will probably appeal more to children and other seekers after truth than to those whose nerves are jaded by the lurid terrors of *Trader Horn* or *Africa Speaks*.

Things to see and hear in the coming week :

Promenade Concert, Queen's Hall, nightly, 8.

Friday, September 16th—
"Words and Music," Adelphi.

Sunday, September 18th—
C. Delisle Burns on "Germany," Conway Hall, 11.
"Let's be Platonic," Ambassadors.

Monday, September 19th—
"Cæsar and Cleopatra," The Old Vic.

Wednesday, September 21st—
"Miracle at Verdun," Embassy.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE Emperor William II was asked recently what he thought of the memoirs posthumously published by Prince Bülow. "I have," he answered, "known many men who committed suicide. Yet Bernhard Bülow is the only one of my acquaintance who has chosen to commit suicide after his death." The truth of this criticism is undeniable: yet in thus immolating his own reputation Prince Bülow has rendered immense services to history. His memoirs are, in fact, the most important political confessions since Metternich. In spite of much inaccuracy, in spite of frequent misrepresentation, in spite of constant vindictiveness, they constitute in their completed mass a human document of intricate precision, an aerial photograph of a period which, from the ground level, escapes comprehension. The frontages of *Die Aera Bülow* are false and ostentatious: behind them huddle the remains of an older, less artificial, less discontinuous, reality. There are little lime-shaded terraces, small plots of garden, and at intervals the back-yards where the dirty linen is stretched on cords. To the foreign observer it is difficult to find any point of connection between the gentle, philosophic Germany of the eighteen-forties, and the strident, vulgar Germany which arose in 1871, between the Weimar and the Potsdam spirit. Prince Bülow's memoirs, and especially this valuable fourth volume, establish that connection. However disgusted we may be by Bülow's chirpy snobbishness, however saddened by his utter meanness of soul, we must realise that in these memoirs he covers the gap between 1849 and 1919, that he gives us (and I am convinced of this analogy) an aerial photograph of that strange city which was the empire of William II. We gaze at this precise photograph: we trace the course of the new boulevards, we estimate their relation to the older town through which they gash their showy perspectives, we see the whole business from above. Let it not be supposed, however, that this panoramic effect derives from any detachment on the part of Prince Bülow: far from it: he gives us a bird's-eye view, yet he is a bird of small affability. The eye of Prince Bülow is that of a conceited and malignant hawk: it is with blood upon his talons that he poises, quivering with rage, above his own epoch.

* * *

The fourth and last volume of the Bülow memoirs is published this week by Messrs Putnam for the price of 25s. It is admirably translated (although "Gesandschaft" is *not* "Ministry") and admirably produced. Messrs. Putnam have displayed intelligence in their decision to retain this volume at the end of the series. Although it deals with the first period of Bülow's life it comes far better in the shape of Volume IV. As an introduction to the three more vital volumes these seven hundred pages of family and social gossip might have detracted from the seriousness of the whole. As a commentary upon the more central phases of Bülow's activity, and as an elucidation of his character, they furnish an invaluable appendix. Reading this endless tittle-tattle we do not, as in the earlier volumes, find our attention diverted by hot waves of reprobation. The fact that in the political events with which this volume deals Bülow was not himself the protagonist spares us that moral indignation which blurred our sympathy in the preceding issues. We can enjoy Bülow's adventures without the tragic feeling that the conceited gestures of this frivolous man involved the destiny of a great nation. And we are thus able to ascertain, as never before, the qualities which mingled with Bülow's excessive faults. His gaiety, his boyishness, his curiosity, his nimbleness, his zest. From this point of view the fourth volume does, in fact, provide an answer to the conundrum which in the first three volumes was left unsolved. We can now see that Bülow possessed a certain winningness, a certain flashy charm. The spectacle of the aged Chancellor dictating in the study of Klein-Flottbek the vivid reminiscences of his early amours may not be wholly edifying. Yet it is less distracting than the record of opportunites sacrificed to conceit, of enmities created by sheer levity, such as corrode the pages of the three earlier volumes. Nor can it be denied that as a conversationalist Bülow is entrancing. In that its implications are less immediately tragic, this last volume is the most readable, the most enjoyable, of the four.

* * *

What does it add to our information? Prince Bülow, for all his exhibitionism, is reserved and very unconvincing upon certain vital points. The two main charges made in Germany against his personal character are concerned with his behaviour to the Bismarck family, and his behaviour to his colleague, Count Karl Dönhoff, whose divorced wife he subsequently married. Over both these episodes Prince Bülow throws a smoke-cloud of sentimentality which obscures, but does not hide, the facts. His early relations with Baron Holstein are also treated with a gay allusiveness which suggests a point of insecurity. He admits in this volume that from the very first he regarded "the man with the hyena eyes" as treacherous, deceptive, and more than a trifle mad. We must discount the prevalent tendency to treat Baron Holstein as the scape-goat for all the errors of German diplomacy. Yet the fact remains that he was a highly dangerous element in the council of the Wilhelmstrasse. How came it that Bülow, who now confesses that he saw through Holstein from the start, retained him as his Assistant Under Secretary? During the many years of the Bülow era Holstein was able to entangle the threads of German policy within the briers of his own persecution mania. How was this permitted? The Bülow memoirs, so far from providing us with an answer to this question, render it an even more incessant enigma. It is not surprising that many Germans should aver that Holstein possessed some secret hold over Bülow, and was able, at moments of disagreement, to blackmail him into submission. He might have destroyed Bülow as he destroyed Eulenberg. Yet to the end Bülow would visit the hyena in his rooms at the Grossbehrenstrasse. The enigma remains unsolved.

* * *

So much for the negative evidence provided by this fascinating volume. The positive evidence is even more instructive. In the first place it shows us the contrast between Bernhard Bülow and his admirable father, between the new Germany and the old. In the second place it displays Bülow as a Hussar officer, and as a militarist at heart. As a boy he heard of the victory of Königgrätz. "For the first time," he writes, "I heard the rustling of the Eagle's wings in all their power. The sound was in my ears all my life." It was, indeed. Hussar lieutenants never make good diplomatists. In the third place it displays Bülow as a professional member of the diplomatic service. We see his mind imbued with the small preoccupations, the petty nimbleness, the furtive discretion, the courteous treachery, of all Continental diplomacy. It is curious to observe that the young Bülow realised that the British diplomatists were somehow different from their colleagues. "I have always," he writes, "preferred the society of my English colleagues. Of all foreigners I consider the English most reliable, the sincerest friends, and the easiest people to get on with." Yet Bülow himself was the perfected type of the Continental diplomatist. Diplomatists, when they become Foreign Secretaries, are always disastrous. A little knowledge may be a dangerous thing. A great deal of knowledge is, especially in international affairs, invariably fatal.

HAROLD NICOLSON.

NEW NOVELS

Foreign Bodies. By Nikolai Gubsky. Elkin Mathews and Marrot. 7s. 6d.

The Offence. By Pierre Bost. Translated by Warre B. Wells. Elkin Mathews and Marrot. 7s. 6d.

Madame Maillart. By Claude Aveline. Translated by Hamish Miles. Lane. 7s. 6d.

Pilate's Wife. By Jean Damase. Translated by Arthur Mayne. Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

Lament for Adonis. By Edward Thompson. Benn. 7s. 6d.

The Deserter. By Lajos Zilahy. Translated by George Halasz. Nicholson and Watson. 7s. 6d.

Snow on Water. By Merle Eyles. Faber & Faber. 7s. 6d.

Magnificent Obsession. By Lloyd C. Douglas. Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.

It is an odd fact that of the eight novels under review—a various and polyglot collection—only one describes a settled state of society, and that this book should be a fairy tale for tired adults rather than a picture of human life as it actually is. The other seven are objective and pessimistic; they represent, with different degrees of skill, modern Europe as an overcrowded railway platform—swarming passengers, resigned, irritable or bellicose, among a battered accumulation of heavy luggage.

Some passengers have been stranded there for good. . . . Of White Russia, its eccentricities and woes, we have heard a great deal since the Revolution; but few novelists, if Joseph Kessel is excepted, have turned the legend to any literary account. Slavs will be Slavs after all; there is no spectacle more depressing to a sober eye than a Russian conscientiously acting the part with fibs, balalaikas and champagne. And most exiles, whether in literature or real life, are characteristic to the verge of anonymity.

Not so Mr. Gubsky's numerous personages. The exiles depicted in his book are a humdrum but charming family of Russian landowners who escape over the border into Finland. Ivan Kurtcheninov leads the way, "taking with him Mlle. Dubois, the aged governess, nine English banknotes of £100 each sewn into his underclothing—he heard their crisp rustle whenever he sat down—and a little leather case full of old photographs (in the hurry of departure he had mistaken it for one in which he had put his wife's jewels)." The rustling banknotes procure them a passage to London; and the rest of the book describes their strenuous but helpless efforts to adapt themselves to the exigences of English life. Ivan joins a refugee committee, hatches abortive schemes of emigration, and finally becomes consul at a northern sea-port. Then he hurries back to the Crimea, where he is killed, and his wife and their five children are left alone.

A fascinating yet matter-of-fact story. Mr. Gubsky's style is loose and undistinguished; but these *Foreign Bodies* move and breathe beneath his hand. He never underlines nor oversimplifies; his method is unemphatic but extremely sure. The compassion which he extends to his hapless characters—particularly to the maternal Madame Kurtcheninov, slaving and suffering in the gloom of industrial England—does not blind him to the comic side of their strange predicament.

Which is more than can be said for M. Bost. All the solemnity of the mercurial Gallic temperament—and no one is so solemn as a solemn Frenchman—comes out in this study of defeated youth. Simon Joyeuse is an aspiring medical student; his friend Pierre, also a student at the same school—they enjoyed a somewhat effusive type of comradeship—meets an older man, "queer" and very rich, who appoints him sub-editor of a review. Simon loses interest in medicine; he, too, would like to get on in the world, and, after a brief taste of dissipation and squalor, manages himself to reach the limelight.

It is understood that, during the process, he "sells his soul." English readers who have relished *Les Faux Monnayeurs* may recall the wicked nobleman in that book—antithesis of the virtuous "oncle Edouard." He reappears in *The Offence* as Pierre's patron, Hugo Lorraine, a sardonic virtuoso, who makes a practice of taking up talented youths, not uncommonly, it would seem, to their moral detriment. . . . At this point, the story loses its grasp. Since the dramatic issue lies between obscurity as an industrious student and notoriety as a brilliant but infamous scribbler it is a pity that the alternatives should be so vague, and that the wicked exciting world of Parisian journalism—all cocktails and modernist furnishings and spiteful back-chat—should remain as unconvincing as a "wild party" on the films.

Lorraine is a mere bogy to the end. But at all events he is a slightly solider personage than *Madame Maillart*, that Messalina of the sanatorium, who wears a black veil to conceal her squint and lies all day long upon a sofa, tossing in agonies of baffled desire. Black velvet curtains exclude the sun. Hither, as to the levée of a female tarantula, are invited Philippe Denis and Madeleine de Charmes, both French, both consumptive and both in love. Madame Maillart smiles evilly and does her deadliest. One could perhaps convey the effect of this strange story by saying that the methods of Julian Green, in some of his most hair-raising nightmare novels, have been grafted on to a pale travesty of *The Magic Mountain*. One cannot but remember Thomas Mann, and the comparison is not helpful to M. Aveline.

The foregoing are studies in moral restlessness. The young consumptives and the young journalists alike want pathetically to be taken by the arm, and are greatly chagrined that there should be none to offer guidance. *Pilate's Wife* is a more cynical affair. I suspect that the present English rendering does not do justice to the Gallic graces of the style and has somehow blurred the sharp outline of the narrative. The impression is, at any rate, a trifle dim. A young Frenchman, attached to the governor of a Syrian province, makes love half-heartedly to the governor's wife, who responds timidly and eagerly, with many misgivings. Meanwhile, the province is in an uproar. The governor—the Pilate of the title—hands over a barefoot prophet from the hills to be judged and condemned by local fanatics. They murder him for an offence against their law. . . .

From French Syria we move south to British Palestine. *Lament for Adonis* is a book which inspires some hope, since Mr. Thompson is a sensitive and thoughtful writer with a large capacity for generous indignation. Love and war divide the pages of his new novel; Captain Remfry, annoyingly nicknamed "Bunny," splendid but modest product of a public school, becomes enamoured of an exquisite American virgin who has arrived under the ægis of the American Relief Force. Virgin she remains to the tragic end. Bunny has—but refuses to take—his chance; and Cynthia, gazing up at him in the wagon-lit, "saw the light in his eyes, and understood." The incident closes with a mythological flourish:

> Under Syria's moon Astarte, ready to lie all Danæ to the Hunter Boy, seeing him because of the holiness of the night stand back from lover and become comrade and adorer, learnt the value of . . . . what she had to give.

Such "fine writing" may be allowed to speak for itself.

The Deserter is a less ambitious type of war novel. It concerns the adventures of a Hungarian patriot in the Austrian armies, first on the Russian and then on the Italian front. He is degraded for striking a superior officer, deserts during the battle of the Piave, is arrested, imprisoned, and, within sight of death, released by the outbreak of the Revolution. These vicissitudes compose a grim and impressive sequence; the novel itself, as far as one can judge from the English rendering, is a capable rather than a brilliant piece of work. But its historical background and the subdued passion of the narrator lend it an interest which it might otherwise not achieve.

Through it all runs the refrain of racial antagonism—the hatred of Czech and Hungarian for Austrian, still active while they form part of the same army. Down with the "oppressors"! And in the opposite corner of Europe Finnish patriots were snapping at Russian heels and being rewarded with an occasional flick of the knout. 1917 brought their opportunity; it also brought them considerable disillusionment, as one learns from Miss Eyles's *Snow on Water*, an episodic and excitably written story, full of bloodshed, loud voices and erratic love affairs.

Perhaps Finnish life is like that, but one hopes not. There must have been a little more light and shade, a larger allowance of ordinary placid human animals, even when Russian officers stalked the streets, spurs jingling as they plotted the ruin of Finnish maidenhood. Nor can the Russians have been so uniformly villainous. . . . *Snow on Water* has some of the virtues of a first novel, qualified by a certain brusque angularity. We bid it farewell and slip gently over the borderline, to wake up in the verdant pastures of Nephelococcugia.

In this realm Mr. Douglas is our guide. A young drunkard, dragged ashore from a watery tomb, is resuscitated with the assistance of a borrowed inhalator, which belonged by rights to a famous surgeon across the way. Awkwardly enough, the famous surgeon also needed it; he, too, had chosen that moment to get drowned. And the young drunkard is much mortified upon his sick-bed by the discovery that his life has been saved at a cost.

In fact, at the cost of the surgeon's genius. Whoring and boozing have hitherto engrossed his talents; but he sets to work and—what do you think?—before very long he has filled, rather more than filled, the gap, and is able to revolutionise the entire practice of brain surgery. Of course, there are cynics wherever one goes; but it is to the credit of the mighty Middle West that *Magnificent Obsession* has been reprinted a dozen times. All Englishmen who love a clean improbable yarn should help to set the ball rolling in their own country.

PETER QUENNELL.

FINGERPOST IN FOG

The Intelligent Man's Guide through World Chaos. By G. D. H. COLE. Gollancz. 5s.

The plain speaking in this book, and the courage which has put it on sale at so low a price, will win unfeigned admiration even from those who cannot concur in Mr. Cole's chief conclusion. Every page of it (and there are six pages for a penny) is to the point; unambiguous, politically sensitive, and as well-informed as *Whitaker's Almanack*. Once again Mr. Cole proves himself to be a very stimulating teacher and a disinterested man of affairs. He has written a thrilling book. Probably no other living Englishman could have written it. As a survey of the slump it is unrivalled. Whatever fate may be in store for the capitalist system of the West, and for the Communist adventure in Russia, the book will serve as an *aide-mémoire* to the future historian. How Mr. Cole's diagnosis and conjectures will look twenty years hence no one can say. But in temper, vivacity, arrangement and skilful explanation his book is masterly. If it meets with the fortune it deserves it will have a hundred thousand buyers.

This tribute is paid by one who, while admiring the author's achievement, is left unconvinced. Mr. Cole's style is as clear as water, but the smooth flow of his words when he comes to the narrows (e.g., in proposing the socialisation of banking) glides over sunken rocks perilous to practical navigators. Again, humanitarian as he is both in his view of economics and in the tests which he applies to plans for reform, he allows it to be seen that at the crucial point he might feel it his duty to be cruel in order afterwards to be kind. But this is a game at which two can play. Men whose "ideology" Mr. Cole abhors may forestall him both in strategy and in tactics. Nor are his treatment of the psychology of saving, nor his analysis of incentives to hard work, nor his passing reference to the scope and methods of English education penetrating enough to win the confidence of the reader at certain critical points in his argument. And, in his last chapter, when he brings us face to face with a grave dilemma, he is more pungent in his forecast of the difficulties which stand in the way of a reinvigoration of world-capitalism than he allows himself to be when enumerating the obstacles, both psychological and nationalistic, which the engineers of Communistic socialism will have to surmount. Mr. Cole presents his forecast in the form of a dramatic dilemma. But one of his readers finds himself surmising after all that the political and economic structure of this country will, for a long time to come, be a shapeless combination of opposite tendencies.

There are hints, however, in Mr. Cole's book which cast an even darker shadow on the mind. The picture which he has drawn confirms the impression that we have reached the end of an age. After 150 years of accelerating achievement our Western type of economic organisation may have passed its zenith. If this is so, the standards of wages and salaries and of social service to which we have become accustomed may be forced slowly to subside, till they have sunk nearer to the level at which far more than the half of mankind now subsists. Mr. Cole shows that Western capitalism has been elaborated to the point at which international co-operation alone can guarantee safety to its major transactions. It is only too possible that under the stress of racial incongruities and of stubborn varieties in human temperament (Mr. Cole is inclined to be as sanguine as Robert Owen about the plasticity of character) capitalism in its more elaborate form may break down. Grim things may happen. We may now be witnessing the first stage of a world-process which, in bringing about some harsher relation between man and his environment, will be pitiless.

But it is a distinctive feature of Mr. Cole's book that he encourages us in taking a more cheerful view. "The economic system," he writes, "is something made by man, and is capable of being remade in order to serve man's needs." He adds that "the one object of the economic activities of mankind" is to promote "human happiness." These brave words have the ring of sincere belief. The reader instantly responds to Mr. Cole's humanism. But when we try to measure the degree and quality of the "happiness" to which man may attain, what comparative value should we attach to physical health, to equanimity and contentment of mind, to love and emotional experience, to delight in beauty, and to that momentary but unforgettable perception of reality which many men and women find in the practice of an art, which others find in poetry, or in music, or in philosophy, and others at times in worship? We may be destined to become poorer in material things, but these are ways by which mankind may become richer than it has ever been before.

MICHAEL E. SADLER.

A MAN'S A MAN . . . .

The Life of Robert Burns. By FRANKLYN BLISS SNYDER. Macmillan. 18s.

At the end of each chapter of this new Life of Burns by Professor Snyder (of North-western University, Illinois) is a complete list of authorities for every fact stated. The book is close on 500 pages long, not counting an index of 200 pages, and appendices. There are plans of the Burns country, portraits, photographs of letters, and facsimiles of bills for bedroom furniture. Yet the book is a disappointment. "Yet," because now that the short, humorous, humanised biography is disappearing, we are beginning to think favourably again of its predecessors; we are beginning to regret in particular the nineteenth century Memoir, like the *Macaulay* of Trevelyan or the *Coleridge* of Dykes Campbell, where with a date or *ætat.* printed at the top of every page, the facts are arranged strictly in chronological order, the motive of the author being his great interest in or admiration for his

A MAN'S WARDROBE

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subject. Perhaps for that reason, and by value of the very bareness of the facts, it begins to seem as if these longer lives were more stimulating to the imagination than those of the Strachey school, which, since they were inspired not so much by admiration as by a kind of affectionate gloating, become in the end as anæsthetising to the imagination and as damping to the spirits as the wordiest of the uncritical eulogies they aim at displacing.

From the introduction and general appearance of this book it looked as if here was an attempt to do for the text of Burns's life what Professor Ferguson did for the text of his letters or the centenary edition for his verse. No one has suffered more from bad editing than Burns: because his first editors were either inaccurate amateurs or catchpenny professionals; because the essential manuscripts are inaccessible or widely scattered; because of Bowdlerisation. Moreover, his biographers seem to have added to the general confusion by forcing his life into coincidence with various popular conceptions—Burns the national hero, fostered by Scotch patriotism: Burns the rake ruined by drink, the special creation of the teetotal and the Old Light: and Burns the heaven-taught ploughman, a view he inclined to propagate himself.

The first and most surprising disappointment in Mr. Snyder's book is that he has gone back to the defensive tradition of nineteenth century Burns biography. He uses his accumulated knowledge to "vindicate" Burns against various "charges." Chapters are wasted in proving that he did not drink nearly so much, or fall in love nearly so many times, as various people have suggested. A whole section is devoted to Burns's "exact relationship" with Mary Campbell, the various points actually numbered off into internal and external evidence; and so hopelessly is the author lost in the delights of exactitude that he makes the climax of his story the detection, as a forgery, of a certain exculpatory note in Burns's handwriting which was thought to explain the whole thing. "The world of scholarship was aghast" at the discovery, he says. But all was well. Later on it was found out not to be a forgery at all. And towards the end of the book it is proved that Burns's death was quite all right too: he died of rheumatic endocarditis.

It would be an exaggeration to say that the whole attitude seems to connect the life of a poet with the moral values of a Sunday newspaper; it is simply that the author is reluctant to acknowledge the differences between men. Page 454:

> Poet he was in very truth: but he was a steady-going man of affairs, nobly endowed with the homely virtue of commonsense

Not so very different, after all, from Professor Snyder.

As this quotation shows, the other great fault of the book is a question of dialect. The author has chosen to write in a strange biography-slang, which makes him suddenly say things like: "What better a place for the birthplace of a poet could be conceived than Ayrshire?" Or "To the fact that the father was distinctly liberal in his theology may fairly be attributed some of his son's later defections from orthodoxy."

It is the same with his criticism. When we have entered with Professor Snyder "into the crucible of the poet's mind" we are not surprised to find that all the pathos is "wistful" and all the tragedy "stark." The author had set himself the worrying task of saying something about all the poems in turn, with space strictly proportional to fame, and when at last he arrived at the verses "To a Mouse" his special *argot* was almost exhausted. But there was one phrase left. "The little vignette is not a still-life pastel, but a picture endowed with life and motion."

In spite of the great usefulness of this volume as a reference book for sources, this must be the complaint: that here once again we are given the old biographer's Burns—the "heaven-taught ploughman," in character "not so black as he is painted." For surely the latter phrase is as misleading by application as the former is in point of fact. The actual quality of Burns was this superb recklessness and warm-heartedness which no defence can minimise, and which, moreover, we now feel showed through his verse in spite of his knowledge rather than in spite of his ignorance of literary tricks and forms. In one of the appendices there is a useful critical list of former Lives. And it is noteworthy that they are judged exclusively by their standard of documentation, which, according to Professor Snyder, seems to be improving. There is progress, he would say: but, of course, progress means verifying references.

STEPHEN POTTER.

HISTORICAL MICROCOSM

The Ancient Parish of Giggleswick. By THOMAS BRAYSHAW and RALPH M. ROBINSON. Halton. 21s.

The English Country Town. By GUY PARSLOE. Longmans. 3s. 6d.

Continuity is a theme for mingled and opposing emotions, and the history of local institutions are at once the wonder, the gratification, and the despair of the philosophic mind. Living in an era of bewildering change in which no man knows what the morrow may bring, we derive a sense of elegiac consolation in viewing the long and more or less stable perspective of the English past. At the same time we are appalled by the tenacity, the chronic durability, of certain fixed ideas which the innate conservatism of mankind most obstinately cherishes, regardless of their inherent worth, their menace to social happiness and concord, their unreasonableness or their inconvenience. These two volumes, both very knowledgeable and capably handled, do, in fact, by the very dustiness of their chronicles, stimulate the imagination, stir the feelings this way and that, and in the end persuade us to the cultivation of that historical point of view in the contemplation of human affairs whose prizes are tolerance and wisdom.

The more readable of these local annals is the first on our list, for the advantage of a large canvas whose subject is a single group of parishes gives an urbane latitude to the authors and enables them to avoid the rather sticky effect of too much compression. The parishes of Giggleswick, Settle and some hamlets attached to them possess from their site on the limestone plateau of the West Riding of Yorkshire an ancestry that carries them forward with remarkably minor perturbations and oscillations from the Ice Ages to the Industrial Revolution. The authors are more than a little shaky in their views upon the prehistoric periods, but the wildness of their dates, and their misconception of neolithic man as a kind of puzzled savage with the hair falling over his furtive eyes is trifling beside the exciting fact that Giggleswick Parish has been occupied by civilised man for little short of four thousand years, and perhaps by primitive man before him for another ten. With Domesday Book these easy, unobtrusive writers get well into their stride, and through the crystal we watch the englamoured rise and fall of the Percies, whose fief included Giggleswick, the land-swallowing processes of the Cistercian abbots, their eclipse under the Tudors, the exhaustion of the great lords after the Roses, the close of the feudal period, and the first tentative beginnings of a democratic form of local government. A most interesting chapter among expansions and developments in which the actual Giggleswickians were the sport of various ambitious stars in the political firmament was the rising of the "Pilgrims of Grace" against the dissolution of the monasteries. This most unexpectedly took the form of a genuinely democratic movement, to the dismay of church, aristocracy and throne alike until the rebels were successfully hoodwinked out of their pretensions. The latter part of the book engagingly records the growth of bylaws, the persecution of the Quakers (George Fox was buried at Giggleswick), the opening up of the turnpike roads, the transference of the wool trade to Bradford and Halifax, the drift to the towns, and the spread of the cotton-mills into the Settle district. The authors might have given rather more space to the social and economic consequences of the Enclosures and the Machine Age, but the reader is not disposed to qualify his gratitude for so clearly viewing the procession of the centuries across a tiny mirror.

The English Country Town is very ably presented by Mr. Parsloe, even though its massed effect is something of a strain upon our powers of assimilation. And the book opens badly. We don't want both a preface and an introduction to a book of under 200 pages, and it simply is not true to say that the country town refuses to be standardised by the industrial katabolism of the last hundred years. The story of the country towns is essentially one of the loss of civic individuality first to national and then to commercial uniformity; and their architectural and other testimonies to a jealous "self-determination" are or soon will be but academic memorials. Even Oxford, to quote a phrase overheard in the train, "is the place where Morris cars are made." Whether we regret or approve the passing away of that stubborn, Puritanical, exclusive, independent spirit of the old corporations Mr. Parsloe so learnedly represents and reanimates can only depend on the observer's mood. The old monopolistic greeds, the old conflicts between the towns and the privileged clergy, between the classes, between lords and burgesses, centralisation and the

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urban unit, these are no more. We can only pray that towns like Wells and Chipping Campden and Ludlow and Christchurch will continue to be enfolded by their green pastures or uncontaminated hills, so that they may become frankly museum pieces like any megalithic arrow-head or eighteenth century warming-pan.

MAZZINI

Mazzini: Prophet of Modern Europe. By GWILYM O. GRIFFITH. Hodder and Stoughton. 10s. 6d.

Certain modern historians are inclined to regard Mazzini with a dubious eye. Their difficulty, of course, is to weigh in the legend of his personality with the facts of *Risorgimento* history. A recent comprehensive European survey, for example, devoted less space to Mazzini than to his contemporary Gioberti, of whose Utopian book only students can have heard. This treatment would have seemed worse to the old faithful than Brougham's question about an interesting exile: "Who is this M. Mazzini? I hear he keeps a gaming-house in the East End." The historian, however, feels more comfortable when the political and economic development of Italy allowed visionaries to resume their normal place in the conduct of public affairs. And there is no gainsaying an impression that the eager young Mazzini, whose call to the Italians was once so vital, became in the end politically marooned, a doctrinaire preacher to humanity at large.

Mr. Griffith is not a historian, and it is pleasant to find in him a biographer who has soaked himself in this period to the extent of being able to bring Mazzini to life as the Mid-Victorians saw him, and not merely so that we can cynically judge him. Thus Mazzini is seen with his celebrated and deadly charm which attracted such widely different persons as Holyoake and Swinburne, and which not only captivated Mrs. Carlyle but sent men to death by firing-parties. Liberalism flourishes in its zenith and in an atmosphere far less rarified than ours; a demagogue is depicted so that we are able to forget Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bottomley. Perhaps this biographical method inevitably obliges Mr. Griffith to write as if at times he had "been down the aria" at Cheyne Row, which is more forgivable than his calling Mazzini a "fantasticator"—a word which would have an irresistible appeal to Mr. Polly. Inevitably we revisit the Italy seen by British eyes in Victorian days, a country reminding us of Dickens' *Pictures from Italy*, and one in which no surprise is experienced if Jesuits habitually carry daggers.

"Give Mazzini three men and four stones," said a bitter critic of the Milan fiasco, "and he will announce a national revolution." The truth is that Brougham's gaming-house keeper was himself an inveterate gambler and one whose winnings were taken over by others. His hazardous plunges, his early desperate insurrections were failures as the Easter Week rising in Dublin was a failure. His dreams were not so transferable, for no politician could take over his dream of a united and republican Italy with a secularised Rome as its capital. Such a dream and such a man became embarrassments when, the nationalist movement having developed into practical politics, Cavour attempted the delicate but altogether mundane task of upsetting the Treaty of Vienna. Fortunately for Cavour, Mazzini could inspire but could not lead. He was too impatient of moderation and too intolerant of opposition for political as distinct from revolutionary leadership. Mr. Griffith is over-enthusiastic in his contention that Cavour's hand was forced by Mazzini's frequent interventions. They had no serious effect on the main course of events.

During his last years in an Italy unified but falling far short of his republican ideal, Mazzini set about founding a Working Men's Federation to counteract the materialism he feared in Marx's International. Just as in his character he was a mixture of winning simplicity, astuteness and guile, so in his ethical and political faith were found oddly assorted elements: terrorism and love, an amateur theism and an idealistic humanitarianism. Even his Liberalism made concessions to Socialism so long ago. As Mr. Griffith insists, Mazzini prophesied disaster to Europe unless it embraced whole-hearted democracy and broke down barriers of national and social hatred, but his opinions do not move us much. He comes down to us as a brave and ardent man who helped to make what was then a new age, and we like to read about his rare and enchanting personality.

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Their Secret Purposes. By HECTOR C. BYWATER. Constable. 10s. 6d.

Most of us retain a relish, open or secret, for blood-and-thunder, the more so if the blood was authentically shed and the thunder spoken victoriously by the guns of our side. Remembering this, Mr. Bywater has made a book with something in it to please everybody, even those who are most amused when their irony is most active. The great war was a great shambles, but it had not, after all, the uniform monotony of such; and Mr. Bywater, by picking over naval records, and keeping his ear peeled for information released from Secret Intelligence files, has collected some pretty examples of derring-do, hazard, hauntings, eavesdropping and subterfuge in the naval affair. Mr. Bywater assures us that he writes to entertain, not to instruct, but just to show that he can be serious he throws in a heartening account of the wonders of British naval fire control, "the facts here presented being entirely new so far as the general public is concerned." And he winds up with a terrific broadside at the ethics of the Washington Conference. A lot can be done with secret intelligence and simple addition sums. Mr. Bywater tots up the tonnage and armament of the projected naval programmes of Britain, America and Japan prior to the Conference, and shows that America only agreed to limitation when (after the usual game of hide-and-seek to beggar-my-neighbour) she realised what was brewing against her in rival shipyards.

When he is not padding Mr. Bywater has a firm hand with the thrilling yarn. He embroiders the wiles of a Russian vamp who made the German Baltic command look silly as happily as he describes how David (of the Allies) slew on several occasions Goliath (of the Central Powers); he has a really thrilling tale of a U-boat whose ghost has refused to be rationalised. There is something here, too, for the hearty optimist because, although Mr. Bywater tries to be fair to the Germans he is bound to tell us that their spies were duffers compared with ours; that they did not really shoot at Jutland as well as many people believe; and that if they still want watching it is all right because we are watching them, as well as other danger spots to our interests. As for the moralist, the idealist, the pacifist, and all such mutineers

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under the Jolly Roger of nationalism, they, poor fellows, are notoriously amused at not being amused, and so Mr. Bywater has plenty for them too. They will note his assurance that there is no moral to this book, and may even retort in their ungrateful way that there are no morals in it either.

A HIGHLAND SCOT AND OTHERS

The Albannach. By FIONN MAC COLLA. John Heritage. 7s. 6d.

Blackcock's Feather. By MAURICE WALSH. Chambers. 7s. 6d.

The Heart is Highland. By FLORA MASSON. Grant and Murray. 7s. 6d.

The Albannach is a novel and a manifesto. It is also a first novel, and has the faults of inexperience. Thus it is fundamentally, if not in detail, autobiographical. Mr. Mac Colla writes of a world he knows intimately and understands, the West Highlands and Glasgow. Most of his characters ring true. With the exception of an Irish housekeeper and an Irish priest, they are not fictional types, but real men and women, the natural products of their country. But not one of them is presented entire, inside and out, except the hero. Murdo Anderson is so predominantly the centre of this novel that he is, one suspects, also its author. Actually this does not interfere with the interest of his story, nor prevent it having a quite clearly defined form. And the accuracy of Mr. Mac Colla's drawing, so far as it goes, of his subsidiary characters allows one to hope that he is something more than a one-novel novelist. But the sympathies and antipathies here revealed are Murdo's sympathies and antipathies. One misses the impersonal insight into human nature which is the hallmark of great creative writers. *The Albannach* reminds one now and then of Liam O'Flaherty's *Informer*, but Mr. O'Flaherty was more detached from his informer than Mr. Mac Colla is from his Highland crofter, and also more attached to the other inmates of his microcosm.

Yet, despite this lop-sidedness, *The Albannach* remains a book worth reading and worth remembering. It is the story of a Highland youth brought up among the narrowest of Dissenters always in a state of rebellion, but never sure in favour of what he is rebelling. He finds happiness at Glasgow, in the spiritual freedom offered by life in a great city. Glasgow itself horrifies him. He is forced by circumstances back into the narrow world from which he had hoped to escape, sinks into despair, torpor, almost insanity, and discovers at last in that world his salvation. This is effected not just by nationalism, which might have been the obvious solution for a young Scottish writer to-day, but by the realisation that what Scotland needs above all is spiritual independence, a change of heart. A return to paganism, some may call it: actually it is a rediscovery of faith in life, of courage to accept mankind for what it is before trying to remould it into something better. Mr. Mac Colla shows that the root-evil of the Scottish religious attitude to humanity is that it condemns humanity. One cannot despise mankind without destroying it. One cannot condemn life and go on living.

Murdo Anderson finds his salvation in the part which he can play in Scotland's change of heart, the kind of part Burns might have played had he taken his power seriously, or had Scotland been ripe for Burns. He has reached at last a truth which, from the very beginning of his story, the author has convinced us is the only truth for Scotland. And it is above all in creating that conviction that Mr. Mac Colla displays the proper skill of a novelist. By that he converts this piece of autobiography into an artistic whole, with form and with a reason for having been written. The wrapper is misleading, and entirely inappropriate.

Blackcock's Feather is the swash-buckling tale of a "gay Gordon" in Ireland in the days of Elizabeth. Presumably there is still a public for this kind of thing. It purports to have been "rendered from the Scots and Gaelic" of its protagonist. An earlier book by Mr. Walsh has been praised by Sir James Barrie.

The Heart is Highland is very sweet and pure and virginal. Unfortunately, it never comes to life. It is difficult to take an interest in the vicissitudes of marzipan figures.

BRITISH STRATEGY

The British Way in Warfare. By LIDDELL HART. Faber and Faber. 12s. 6d.

"The purpose of this book," says Captain Liddell Hart in his preface, "is to show that there has been a distinctively British practice of war, based on experience and proved by three centuries of success." After this the innocent reader may feel some surprise at finding himself involved in a discussion of the respective shares of Joffre and Galliéni in the victory of the Marne, a description of the new Italian army, and a running commentary on British military manoeuvres, with special reference to the development of tank tactics.

The book consists in fact of a number of papers (many of them reprinted) on various military subjects, and derives such unity as it possesses from the bias (using the word in no question-begging sense) given to the treatment of each subject by the author's underlying strategical prepossessions. Its core will be found in Chapter V, "Strategy Re-framed," rather than in the somewhat sketchy review of "The Historic Strategy of Britain" with which it opens.

This opening chapter is, in part, a restatement of the old thesis that Great Britain has been most successful in war when she has put her main effort into the exertion of naval and economic pressure, and, in the use of her army, has taken the fullest advantage of those opportunities for mobility and surprise which are afforded by sea-power. Mobility and surprise are of the essence of Captain Hart's strategical teachings, and so far his choice of title is justified. There is, however, one very nasty snag. His own strategical doctrine is based very largely on a plea for direct attack upon the political and economic nerve centres by which the enemy's armed forces are nourished, rather than upon those armed forces themselves. British naval strategy was firmly based (though this would not be gathered from his pages) upon a single-minded determination to find and destroy the enemy's fleet, or to take measures for preventing it from putting to sea without fighting; *after* which the conquest of colonies and the destruction of the enemy's trade could proceed at leisure. The object of its opponents was usually to evade

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action and make direct for the ulterior objective : they preferred, as they said, solid conquests to the glory of taking a few ships. The usual result was that they were caught at a disadvantage and beaten, with the resultant loss of everything they had attained. It is open to anyone to say that conditions at sea differ from those on land, or that the conditions of the twentieth century differ from those of the eighteenth. The fact remains that an appeal to the historic strategy of Britain is a very double-edged weapon in Captain Hart's hand.

Like everything else by the same author, the book bears the stamp of an alert and acute mind, and it will be found stimulating and suggestive even by those who may think many of its conclusions questionable and many of its criticisms unjust. The fact that it is largely concerned with the development of modern weapons and their effect on warfare makes its appearance particularly timely. There is force in Captain Hart's contention that to prepare for peace you must understand war, and these papers should help both to emphasise the urgency of the disarmament question and to throw light on its technical problems.

SHORTER NOTICES

Tales of Army Life. Vol. IV. The Works of Tolstoy. Translated by LOUISE and AYLMER MAUDE. With an Introduction by SHANE LESLIE. Oxford University Press. 189s. the set.

The new volume of the Tolstoy Centenary Edition contains seven stories written between 1852 and 1863, and a preface written by Tolstoy in 1889 to Erstov's *Sevastopol Recollections.* They are the fruit of his experiences as a young man in the army, and foreshadow the marvellous battle-pieces of *War and Peace*, which was begun some years later. As Mr. Aylmer Maude points out in an introduction, Tolstoy questioned the justifiability of war from the first, and in the earliest story here, *The Raid* (1852), we find the censor already interfering with Tolstoy's expression of this opinion. The censored passages are restored and printed in square brackets. From the first, too, one finds Tolstoy's affection for the soldier's life, his analysis of courage (in which he has been surpassed by no other writer), his contempt for military tactics, his insistence on the accidental in warfare and the futility of bloodshed and victory. The longest and most impressive of these stories, *The Cossacks*, was meant as the first section of a novel in three parts ; but the last two parts were never written, because Tolstoy abandoned this project and began *War and Peace* instead. What a fine story *The Cossacks* is ! It contains few important scenes, the characters are not long enough before us to grow old as they do in his finished masterpieces, yet Tolstoy has infused into his description of the routine of life in a Cossack village an extraordinary actuality and depth. Turgenev had a high opinion of this story. The translation by Mr. and Mrs. Aylmer Maude is uniformly good. As the edition advances, one notices less the small annoyances of print and appreciates more and more the vast amount of time and labour that must have been spent on the production of these volumes. When it is completed, it will stand as one of the best and most accurate standard editions of an author that we possess.

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Schopenhauer : His Life and Philosophy. By HELEN ZIMMERN. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

This book is a labour of leisure and affection that can hardly fail to attract and delight all readers who value a work of literary craftsmanship. Miss Zimmern writes in a clear, direct style that is a pleasure to read, and though she says that the life-history of her subject is "little more than the record of his thoughts and works," she nevertheless succeeds in giving us a picture of Schopenhauer quite as distinct as the portrait that embellishes the cover. And the same easy, supple prose that so surely fashions out the likeness of the man, manipulates with an equal sureness the philosophical system of Schopenhauer, setting it in clear relief against the falsity of the contemporary and more popular philosophies, and relating it to its modern statement by our own exponents of Voluntaryism and the Life-Urge. This Memoir is our idea of what a biography should be.

Erskine. By J. A. LOVAT-FRASER. Cambridge University Press. 5s.

The latter half of the eighteenth century was remarkable for the re-emergence of oratory as a factor in English literature. Pitt, Fox, Burke and Sheridan were in the House of Commons ; Wesley and Whitefield were preaching ; and Erskine was bewitching judges and juries. He was the greatest forensic orator that has ever practised in England, and has rightly been compared with Cicero. This book is a popular account of his professional career with a critical appreciation of his powers as an orator. (It is a curious fact, however, that he failed in the House of Commons—overawed, it is said, by the personality of Pitt.) In particular, Mr. Lovat-Fraser has drawn attention to Erskine's importance in the development of the Constitution. The book is not less readable because it has been written from this point of view rather than the biographical.

Development of the League of Nations Idea : Correspondence of Theodore Marburg. Edited by J. LATANÉ. Macmillan. 2 Vols. 40s.

Dr. Theodore Marburg was one of the earliest, and remained the most persistent, of United States propagandists in favour of the League of Nations. It was he who, in June of 1916, induced his friend Mr. Taft to accept the presidency of the League to Enforce Peace, and it was he who, when Taft and others became luke-warm on the subject of American adherence to Article 10, took a leading part in the campaign for ratification. To British readers these two stout volumes will be of interest as evidence of the sanity and foresight evinced on League questions by such men as Grey, Bryce, Cecil and Borden. So early as September, 1916, we find Lord Grey doubting whether America would ever adhere to a League of Nations, and recognising how damaging to any such association would be her abstention. The book is overcrowded by letters of very subsidiary importance, but the student of League history will, with the aid of a competent index, be able to discriminate the grain from the chaff.

About Motoring

JACKS, TYRES, DIPSTICKS, AND TRIUMPHS

I AM not going to write in any close detail about the 1933 Triumph cars, which on the whole present no very exciting differences from battalions of 1932 cars of similar type. The firm possesses an unusually affectionate clientele, because most male car owners are ex-motor cyclists, and the Triumph Co. rescued the British motor cycle industry from extinction some twenty years ago, and subsequently built up an enviable reputation in the minds of young British manhood by designing motor cycles intelligently and manufacturing them conscientiously. So many thousands of English people trust this factory as they trust few others ; and confidence is a great asset in these days when a car factory is so liable to work three shifts per day one year, and accept a receiver twelve months later. All I really need say about the 1933 Triumph cars is that they are cleverly designed and honestly built, as everybody knows they must be ; and that the firm's 1932 slogan seems to be to go one better than anybody else in providing free equipment

JOHN MURRAY

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with their cars, so that no purchaser will wish to spend any money on extras. However, their new season models will serve as a text for a sermonette. For thirty-five years every motorist in the world has loathed a punctured tyre; and for the last half-dozen years most motorists have loathed the job of adjusting brakes. Both jobs necessitate the use of jacks. The average motor-car jack is a loathsome article. Being given gratis with the car, it is usually rather a cheap and nasty article (anybody can buy far more attractive and efficient jacks than are ever given free with a car, just as anybody can buy far better tyre pumps than ever figure in a standard tool-kit). With one of these presentation jacks, the jacking of the front axle is not a foul job. It entails stooping; but many of us can still stoop without suffering from a subsequent crick in the spine. Moreover, most front axles contain some flat or curved surface which accepts the head of the jack without extreme reluctance or marked wobbliness. Jacking the rear axle is a very different affair. You cannot approach it from the front because the running boards are in the way, and are very low. You cannot approach it from astern because the rear tank is in the way. The job can be done by a young and supple person on a dry day, always assuming that the said person is sartorially reckless, or is wearing a suit which is ripe for a jumble sale. But no stout or elderly person can enjoy jacking up a rear axle, even in old clothes on a fine day; and on a wet day in new clothes the task becomes positively blasphemous. Some years ago at least two inventors produced jacking systems which transformed this job into a pleasure. I am not exaggerating; any seasoned motorist experiences a genuine thrill when he is set to jack up a car fitted with the Stevenson or Jackall equipment. Given this apparatus, neither the weather nor your clothes matter in the least. An optimist would imagine that every motor car factory in the world would rush to fit these jacks under licence. In sober fact, nobody has done so until this very month, when the Triumph people mustered their courage, and faced the few shillings extra per car necessary to instal the Stevenson jacking system. They deserve great public support for their temerity, and I hope their example will shame other designers into doing likewise.

The chassis costs of these small cars are shaved so fine from dread of losing their market to rival factories that we cannot expect even the Triumph directors to soar to full imaginative sympathy with the average petulant owner. But as they have given us a lead in this aspect of motoring, may I remind them of other disagreeables associated with all the motor cars in the world? We all hate our dipsticks. A dipstick, as the reader probably knows, is a level rod protruding into the oil sump, scored with gauge marks, and read by means of green stains. You can only use it when the engine is cold, for it gives a false reading whenever the engine has been running, and some of the oil has been thrown up into the cylinders, and has not yet had time to drain down again. To use it, you must (a) withdraw it; (b) wipe off the deceptive green stains smeared far too high on the stick when the oil was last churned up inside the engine; (c) replace it; (d) withdraw it once more; and (e) finally replace it. Eighteen years ago I had a car—not of British manufacture—which had a float level indicator for the oil. I merely slipped aside a small hinged cap, allowed the float needle to rise, noted its position, pushed it down, and turned the cap over it. It was far easier to operate than a dipstick; but it is extinct. Why?

Or again I might remark that every motorist hates his tyre pump almost as much as he hates his jack. It is laborious in action, usually out of order when required, and awkward to pack in safety. Many years ago I owned cars which entirely dispensed with tyre pumps. Some of them mounted cylinders of compressed air, exchangeable for a small fee at innumerable garages. Some of them were designed with small engine-driven pumps. The ideal is probably a cylinder for the storage of compressed air arranged to be charged by an engine-driven pump. Goodness knows, we run our engines idle for long enough per annum to inflate all the tyres used by Imperial Airways. We run our engines in garages to warm them up before starting out; we run them outside shops; we run them in London traffic blocks. It should not baffle the wit of man (which has produced that ingenious gadget, the Startix) to devise an engine-driven pump which would automatically charge an air storage cylinder whenever the engine was idling. But a storage cylinder which had to be coupled to the engine by hand would be better than one of those cheap red-and-yellow toy pumps which are supplied gratis with too many motor cars. Many owners are quite unfitted by health and contour to pump tyres by hand, and the others are too lazy. It is not as if correct inflation were a mere matter of muscular exertion. You first remove the cap of the tyre valve, perhaps to discover that the valve is faulty, and that most of the air remaining in your tyre whistles madly out into the atmosphere. However, assuming that the tyre valve is in good order, you attach the pump, and begin to pedal or lever it. Since you hate waste, you are careful not to over-inflate, and when you judge the tyre to be sufficiently rotund, you disconnect the pump and apply a gauge, which informs you that you are 2lb. short, and that the tyres will squeal on corners, bump on potholes, and nullify the maker's guarantee. You reattach the pump, do some more work, try the gauge again, and so on. Even if the job be shorn of its exhaustion, it is a tedius, irritating business to get four, five or six tyres to the correct pressure. Anybody who simplifies it deservedly ranks as a public benefactor. It cannot, apparently, be simplified up to any ideal standard; but it can very easily be stripped of all muscular effort.

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A Story

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Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

No. 9.—BETTY'S CIPHER

In the absence from duty of Miss Georgina Pawl, form-mistress of the Upper Fourth, Miss Auburn Head took her place. On the first day Miss Head intercepted the following message from Betty to one of her form-mates:

8MAP85M DAP858 DU33568 263 D5M B24 8AJ 2 EAS3 263 DP2D4 95SS 35M 9B5SM 4BM4 2921 BMP JB26HSM44 NA7 95SS 7M DMPGAPZM3 71 8568MP6A7.

Miss Head could not read it. Can you?

No. 8.—MATES

On the assumption set out explicitly in my note of last week:

Alasker beats Snooper.
Steinisch draws with Morfew.
Algonquin draws with Puschowski.

"I note with pleasure," writes one competitor, "the poor scores obtained by Titterdown and Puschowski." The evil that men do lives after them!

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3	4	2	0	0	0	+14	+4	−6	−6	−6	£18
4	4	1	1	0	0	+14	−1	−1	−6	−6	£14
5	3	3	0	0	0	+ 9	+9	−6	−6	−6	£18
6	3	2	1	0	0	+ 9	+4	−1	−6	−6	£13
7	3	1	1	1	0	+ 9	−1	−1	−1	−6	£ 9
8	2	2	2	0	0	+ 4	+4	+4	−6	−6	£12
9	2	2	1	1	0	+ 4	+4	−1	−1	−6	£ 8
10	2	1	1	1	1	+ 4	−1	−1	−1	−1	£ 4

(2) In six days the pool totals £78. No two amounts paid in are the same. Hence the payments on the six days can only have been:

(1) £24, (2) £19, (3) £14, (4) £9, (5) £8, (6) £4.

and the corresponding amounts payable to the most successful solver must have been:

(1) £24, (2) £19, (3) £14, (4) £9, (5) £4, (6) £4.

(3) We can now construct as much as is required of our competition table:

Setters.	Solvers					
	A	*B*	*C*	*D*	*E*	*F*
A		14	−1	−1	−6	−6
B	19		−1	−6	−6	−6
C	24	−6		−6	−6	−6
D	9	−1	−1			
E	4	4	−1			
F	4	−1	−1			
Total	60	10	−5	?	?	?

(*a*) *A* wins £60. He must therefore be the setter under scheme (3) above.

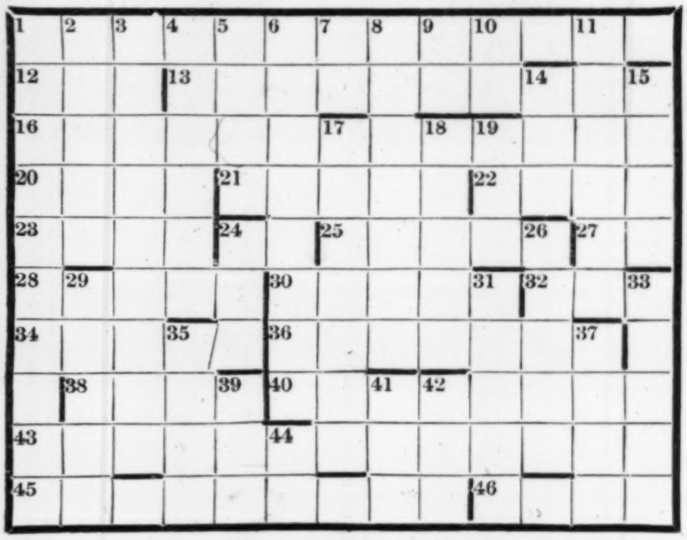
(*b*) *C* loses the same amount each day. This can only be £1. Hence he must be the setter under scheme (1), while *B* is the setter under scheme (2).

The remainder of the relevant data are set out in the table above.

B on balance wins £10.

Sets of Low's cartoons, in portfolio, will be awarded to the senders of the first two correct solutions opened. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Gt. Queen St., W.C.2, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday, Sept. 27th.

TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



CONSPIRATORIAL

ACROSS

1. Often important in the witness box.
12. A sash—do purchase one!
13. Nutritive, my dear Watson.
16. Once an object of persecution.
20. Not exercised now by the Crown.
21. Balance in a cetacean.
22. A mere title.
23. Found in a wound.
24 *rev.* Persimmon's mother before 44 *rev.*
25. A really bad crash.
27. Part of the paper before 37.
28. Gathered in after the hey.
30. Corporative state.
32. An awkward lie.
34. 22, for example.
36. Treated but no treat.
38. Irritate.
40. Ladies' man.
43. Not popular with 16.
45. Early type of 16.
46. You'll find me without.

DOWN

1. Two clubs, for instance.
2. Here is wind in the wood.
3. Late the hound of Hollywood.
4. Little bear.
5 *rev.* Sportive collar.
6. a + b.
7 *rev.* Decapitated statesman before 44 *rev.*
8 *rev.* Handy with a rope.
9, 10. So much confused at Calais.
11. See my title (or am I in error?)
14. To love 26 before 44.
15 *rev.* The Garden Suburb is said to be.
17. Woman's sphere, they say.
18. More than real to Henry VIII.
19. Spoil an upturned beast.
24. Half of a split hare.
26. No. IV is most famous.
29. *rev.* A Premier's inner man.
31. Bard.
33. Not fed at the Corner-House.
35. Stunted.
37. See 27 and 39.
39. Agitation before 37.
41 *rev.* A boy follows me.
42. A freeman without a flower.
44. See 24 *ac.*, 7, 14.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS.—1. p-ear-l. 5. aorta. 9. Mar(s). 12. amend. 14. Derby. 16. (t)ie(r). 17. P.R. 18. Oread. 20. Maria *rev.* 22. Lar(s). 24. usual. 26. cargo. 28. Nora *rev.* 30. trick. 32. Sion. 34. teams. 36. adits. 38. Una. 39. (v)assal. 41. avens. 43. G.C.(R.). 44. (p)as(t). 45. Timon. 47. spine *rev.* 49. pas. 51. epact. 53. edict *rev.* 55. Enid. 56. stars. 57. enow.

DOWN.—1. pi. 2. ear. 3. amor (Roma). 4. re-run. 5. ad(o). 6. odd. 7. real. 8. trick. 9. M(a)y. 10. aim. 11. Reno. 13. nests. 15. brass. 17. plate. 19. aural. 21. Arius. 23. areas. 25. Aidan. 27. gongs. 29. oasts. 31. civet. 33. nacre. 35. deism *rev.* 37. tents. 40. Amps. 42. Nice. 44. (sh)ape(s). 46. oat. 48. pin. 50. an(odes). 52. ca(t). 54. do (= ut).

CALIBAN

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m., unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH.	FIFTY-FIFTY.	Wed. & Fri.
GAIETY.	PARTY.	Wed. and Thurs.
NEW.	TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD.	Thurs., Sat.
QUEEN'S.	EVENSONG.	Wed., Sat.
ST. JAMES'.	BEHOLD, WE LIVE.	Wed., Sat.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Temple Bar 6404.
Evgs. 8.15. Mats., Wed. and Fri., 2.30.
RALPH LYNN in
FIFTY-FIFTY.

COLISEUM. Charing Cross. Tem. Bar 3161.
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Sir Oswald Stoll presents
Erik Charell's
CASANOVA.

GAIETY. Temple Bar 6991. Evgs. at 8.30.
IVOR NOVELLO'S *PARTY.*
LILIAN BRAITHWAITE. BENITA HUME.
Mats. Wed. and Thurs. 2.30.

NEW. St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2. Tem.: 3878.
Evgs. 8.15 sharp. Mats. Thurs. and Sat. 2.30.
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TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD.
By BERNARD SHAW.
CEDRIC HARDWICKE.

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ST. JAMES'. Whitehall 3903.
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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR

WALL STREET BREAKS—THE WORLD FINANCIAL CRISIS—THE PETROL HOLD-UP—KREUGER

THE only bad thing about the break in Wall Street is that it is two weeks late. The rise had gone too fast and too far. The American speculator has no sense of moderation. In London, we are taught that if you want to see a rising market you must feed it with shares: you must let the advance develop gradually by allowing buyers to get into the market during a series of small reactions. The fatal thing is to allow an advance to gather momentum for eight weeks without a serious check. This, unfortunately, is what Wall Street did. The American "bull" when he has tasted blood is content with nothing less than the slaughter of the entire bear army. The following table shows the wild behaviour of the common shares of a few well-known companies, which, incidentally, are all reporting trading losses:—

	Prices, 1932.		
RAILS.	July 7th/8th.	Sept. 7th.	Sept. 13th.
Atchison	19¼	62	52¾
Baltimore and Ohio	5½	19¾	15⅜
New York Central	11	30⅜	25⅛
Missouri, K. and Texas	1⅞	8⅜	5⅜
INDUSTRIALS.			
American Smelting	7⅜	26½	18¼
International Nickels	4⅞	11¼	9⅜
Radio	3½	12½	9¼
U.S. Steel	21½	52½	42⅜

I have not picked out abnormal market movements. For the most exciting market ride you should hire Auburn Auto for a few weeks. This chariot normally moves in ten point bounds. But when respectable common stocks like Atchison and Baltimore and Ohio more than treble in market value within two months something unpleasant is bound to happen. At the height of the speculative fever a prominent operator solemnly let the public know that "Nickels will go to 20." This was for me the writing on the wall. The reaction started on Friday of last week and by the following Tuesday night the market had lost 30 per cent. of its two months' rise.

* * *

The immediate cause of the Wall Street reaction was the break in cotton prices which followed upon an unfavourable crop report—unfavourable for the market, but good for the forgotten grower. The few signs of business improvement—such as the increase in railway car loadings and in steel operations—were ignored. Finally, the return of a Democrat Governor for Maine frightened the Republican bulls. Candidate Roosevelt has made it clear that he disapproves of the power of the big utility combines and will have their charges lowered. Utilities will probably continue to be a weak market. Indeed the whole market may remain for a time unsettled. But the seeds of recovery in America have been sown, and it will be surprising not to see evidence of some business improvement before the end of the year. It is outside the United States that the prospect is appalling. If the American financial crisis has been solved, nothing has been done to end the international financial crisis. In Europe the Soviet Government may be forced to default on its bills this autumn, which may have unfortunate repercussions in Germany. A fresh financial collapse coming on top of a fresh political upheaval in Germany will be very disturbing. The financial condition of Central Europe remains as desperate as ever. In South America, the finances of Brazil are being further disorganised by a civil war. The coffee ports of San Paulo are closed and with them the main source of the Federal Government's revenues. Chile is sitting ruined on its heaps of nitrate. Even in Argentina there is discussion as to whether the Federal Government should not immediately suspend sinking fund payments on its external debt. What is the World Economic Conference going to do? Can it inject fresh purchasing power into the bankrupt debtor countries by some monetary device? The trouble is that political conditions in Germany may get out of hand and prevent international co-operation so that the Conference will only pass pious resolutions.

* * *

The advance of 3d. per gallon in the price of petrol in the midst of a great trade depression shows what a world trust in an industry can do if it has sufficient cheek. The only justification for the advance is that at the old prices no petrol company in Great Britain was making a fair profit. It seems odd to make petrol dearer at the end of the summer holidays, but no doubt the petrol companies would have done so at the beginning if they had not been quarrelling among themselves. It has taken many months for the oil companies to work out a world-wide agreement. At the Paris conference in July the Royal Dutch Shell group, the Anglo-Persian-Burmah Oil group, the Standard Oil and other American oil exporters, and the Roumanian producers agreed to stop cut-throat competition and to limit their production to the requirements of their marketing outlets. Ratification by the Roumanian producers of the Paris Pact had been held over till September 15th in order to obtain the consent of individual Roumanian producers whose output is to be curtailed about 30 per cent. On Monday ratification was received: on Tuesday the price of petrol went up. The new oil marketing trust has lost no time. Nor was it wise to do so for petrol consumption in America is falling off—having been in July 15 per cent. below July, 1931. American gasoline prices are showing an easier trend. The shares of the international oil combines have been rising in the past month or so in anticipation of the Paris agreement. They are now standing, I think, at levels which fully discount an improvement in world trade in 1933. It must be remembered that the 1932 accounts of Royal Dutch, Shell and Anglo-Persian will cover nine months of unprofitable trading. The share valuations are far ahead of earnings:

	Dividends % for 1931.		Prices, 1932.		
	Interim.	Final.	Low.	Present Price.	Approx. Yield, %.
Anglo-Persian Oil, £1 ...	Nil	5	29/4½	2⅛	£2 0 0
Burmah Oil Co., £1 ...	5	12½	32/9	3 1/16	£5 5 8
Royal Dutch, Fl. 100 ...	Nil	6	10¼	19⅛	£3 12 9
Shell Transport, £1 ...	Nil	7½ free	30/7½	2⅝	£2 17 2 free £3 16 2 gross

* * *

According to the administrators of the bankrupt estates of Kreuger and Toll, the late Ivar Kreuger was not a great man of business, but an ordinary criminal. To many people the distinction will not be apparent. Personally, having a passion for sanity, I like to regard both the criminal and the business genius as mad. I would confine both to asylums and submit them to the experimental treatment of the psycho-analyst, a fearful enough punishment. But I doubt whether any colossally rich business man can be honest as we understand honesty. Even under the capitalist system a man cannot honestly earn much more than £50,000 a year by the use of his brain. Executives of the big oil combines or film companies in America used to earn salaries of this huge amount in the boom days, but no one made a fortune of millions except by reckless share speculations or company promotions or deals. Kreuger himself died with liabilities of £58½ millions, according to the administrators' report, and with assets of nearly £5 millions. Most bankruptcy suicides have been content with financial murder of less degree. The participating debenture holders and shareholders of Kreuger and Toll will probably receive nothing—their shares are quoted nominally at 6d.—but the protective committee for the holders of the secured debentures (which are quoted hopefully at 30) are still hopeful of a substantial realisation. The par value of the bonds held as collateral for the $47½ millions of Kreuger and Toll secured debentures is $59 millions. Since the trustees assumed control of this collateral in April, 1932, they have collected over $850,000 in current interest on the bonds. The shareholders of Swedish Match are in a more fortunate position than those of Kreuger and Toll. The Swedish Match, having a business and goodwill, was considered "worth a struggle" and is to be reconstructed. The 100 Kr. shares rose last week to 20s. when markets were discounting a world trade revival. To-day they can be bought at 15s. and to-morrow perhaps cheaper still.

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Emile Burns. 2/6

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Particulars and forms of application may be obtained from the Secretary.

EXAMINATIONS

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A.D. 1885.
EXAMINATIONS.

Notice is hereby given that the next examination of Candidates resident in England and Wales will be held in London, Manchester, Cardiff and Leeds on the following dates:—

Preliminary Examination October 31st and November 1st, 1932.

Intermediate Examination November 2nd and 3rd, 1932.

Final Examination November 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1932.

Candidates desirous of presenting themselves must give notice to the undersigned on or before September 27th, 1932.

BY ORDER OF THE COUNCIL.
A. A. GARRETT,
SECRETARY.

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Junior and Senior Courses in Grammar, Translation and Composition, and Courses in Modern and Mediaeval Dutch Literature will begin on Thursday, 6th October at Bedford College.

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C. O. G. Douie,
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University College, London, W.C.1.

or to

Miss O. E. Monkhouse,
Secretary,
Bedford College, London, N.W.1.

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